

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Statement of GYLA Regarding the Chamber of Control of Georgia Massively Obtaining Statements from Citizens in the Regions

Throughout the last two days the Chamber of Control of Georgia has been massively summoning people in the regions to obtain their statements in buildings of local municipalities. According to media reports, people have been summoned in Kutaisi, Zugdidi, Poti, Sagarejo, Gurjaani, Lanchkhuti, Chikhatauri. Dozens of individuals in the

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regions received similar notices from the Chamber of Control of Georgia informing addressees that they had been summoned to give their statement regarding the administrative proceedings ongoing at the Chamber's department of financial monitoring of political parties.

As members and activists of oppositional parties clarify, statements are currently obtained in different municipalities of western Georgia. Obtaining of statements from citizens at the administrative building of Lanchkhuti municipality lasted several hours on March 12. During the noted period, movement of both citizens and journalists within the administrative building was limited. According to media reports, statements were obtained under a psychological pressure in Lanchkhuti on March 12. According to the reports, frequently citizens that had been summoned were deprived of their right to defense.

According to reports, the process of obtaining statements is ongoing in Batumi. Citizens have been summoned in Kutaisi.

Currently the process of obtaining statements is underway in the building of Gamgeoba of Chokhatauri Municipality, where lawyers of GYLA are representing interests of several individuals. According to the information provided by lawyers, persons that have been summoned undergo personal search for security reasons and frequently, in abusive forms. The Chamber of Control officials are asking the following questions: whether the person concerned is a member of a political party, whether s/he is disseminating newspapers of the Georgian Dream, whether s/he was collecting signatures with a request of granting Georgian citizenship to Bidzina Ivanishvili and therefore, whether s/he received any compensation for the work. It is noteworthy that the Chamber of Control officials were asking these questions for hours, which is viewed as repressive by citizens that had been summoned.

GYLA believes that all individuals should be informed of the fact that they had been summoned about to give statements. Furthermore, every person should be able to exercise their right to defense guaranteed by the Constitution. The process should be transparent and journalists should be allowed to carry out their professional activities. It is the positive obligation of the government to provide an opportunity for realization of the right to defense to every individual.

GYLA calls on the Chamber of Control to ensure protection of constitutional rights of

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all citizens based on the principles of objectivity and openness.

GYLA is actively involved in the aforementioned developments, providing free legal assistance for all applicants. All individuals that believe they are in need of legal aid may apply to offices of GYLA both in Tbilisi and in the regions.