

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Statement of Members of the NGO Platform No to Phobia

The present statement has been issued in reaction to the document published on official website of Khulo Sakrebulo, titled 'Report by the chairman of the fraction Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia in Khulo's Municipal Council about previous work implemented', containing hate speech and displaying anti-Armenian sentiments.

In particular, the document contains negative references to the alleged Armenian origin of Mikheil Saakashvili, former president of Georgia and current Governor of Odessa Oblast of Ukraine:

“Saaka the Armenian is smart enough to watch from afar the case of Zurab Zhvania, who he killed himself, the case of unjustly killed Aprasidzes, the case of Guram Sharadze killed dishonourably in the street, the cases of up to 150 young men killed in the streets, the case of a father who was killed on his child’s grave, the case of the so-called Navtlughi Operation where three people from our region were killed entirely unjustly, and the list goes on!” ... “Today Saaka tries to do stuff under American protection, but in the long run he’s working in Russia’s interest”.

“It seems that the plight of the Georgian people wasn’t enough for him as today this swine roots around in Ukraine’s steppes with its dirty snout.”

We believe that by publishing materials with anti-Armenian sentiments and hate speech that were made by the chairman of the fraction of the ruling political party Georgian Dream on a governmental website, Khulo’s Municipal Council encourages xenophobia and hatred, as a specific ethnicity is presented as a reason for shame.

The law of Georgia on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination obliges public institutions to:

“Article 4.

- a) bring its activity, legal acts and internal regulations, if any, into conformity with this Law and other anti-discrimination legislation;
- b) respond promptly and effectively to any alleged act of discrimination;
- c) if an act of discrimination is confirmed, impose liability on offenders under its control according to the legislation of Georgia and internal regulations, and ensure that the consequences of discrimination are eliminated without prejudice to the rights and legitimate interests of third persons.”

Georgia is also a member of the European Commission against Racism and Racial Intolerance. Many documents adopted by the Commission condemn use of xenophobic elements in political statements and deems it unethical (see for instance,

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March 17, 2005 Declaration of the Commission).

We urge the chairman of Khulo's Municipal Council to respond in a speedy and effective manner to the said fact and remove from the website the content with xenophobic sentiments and hate speech.

Sakrebulo must elaborate regulations that will ensure prevention of such incidents and promote implementation of anti-discrimination policy.

We urge the Public Defender to examine and respond to the incident, within the scope of his competencies.

We urge the political union Georgian Dream to respond to the said xenophobic expression by using its internal party mechanisms.

Signatories:

Georgian Democratic Initiative, GDI

Media Development Fund, MDF

Sapari

Identoba

Georgian Reforms Association, GRASS

Tolerance and Diversity Institute, TDI

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association, GYLA

Transparency International - Georgia, TI

Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center (EMC)