

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Statement of the NGOs

The NGOs believe that acts of torture and inhuman treatment that occurred throughout the recent years in the penitentiary system remain unresponded.

After videos showing acts of torture and ill-treatment in penitentiary facilities were made public last year in September, the NGOs have highlighted that ill-treatment and investigation of ill-treatment was a systemic problem that the Public Defender as well as NGOs have attempted to tackle throughout the years. The video material made public was one of the examples of the systemic problem. Therefore, in addition to other requirements, NGOs have also demanded independent, objective and **effective probe** into all cases that involved **torture** and **ill-treatment**, including into the cases

shown on the video tapes. Further, we also proposed to confer the mandate of investigating to a public prosecutor who would enjoy public trust and would utilize humane and technical resources at its disposal to focus on investigation of torture and ill-treatment; and lastly, to set up within the public prosecutor a **board** manned by relevant professionals – lawyers, doctors and psychologists, to ensure active engagement and monitoring of public. The board would interview prisoners throughout Georgia, collect evidence and provide it to the public prosecutor.

Despite an extraordinarily high public interest in the investigation, no efficient steps have been made. Investigators have not started actively interviewing inmates to collect information and public has not yet been duly informed about the course of investigation.

The importance and the necessity of investigating acts of torture and ill-treatment is highlighted in the [32nd annual report of the Human Rights Watch](#) and the [Information note by the COE co-rapporteurs Michael Aastrup JENSEN and Boriss CILEVICS](#).

In this light, the demands that we raised in September 2012 remain relevant.

Ineffective investigation of torture and inhuman treatment has been promoting the climate of impunity throughout the years. However, as an effective investigation is the key to combating torture and inhuman treatment, it must also be the first and foremost objective of the authorities. Therefore, for detection and effective investigation of torture and inhuman treatment in penitentiary facilities, we demand the following:

- 1) Confer the mandate of investigating acts of torture and inhuman treatment to a special group as soon as possible;
- 2) Set up a board manned by relevant professionals – lawyers, doctors and psychologists, which will interview inmates throughout Georgia and collect evidence;
- 3) Keep public informed actively and on a regular basis about course of investigation of torture and inhuman treatment;

We further demand making of efficient steps for rehabilitation of victims of torture and inhuman treatment.

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Georgian Young Lawyers' Association
Transparency International – Georgia
Global Initiative on Psychiatry – Tbilisi
Article 42 of the Constitution
International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy
Public Defender
Penal Reform International
Open Society – Georgia Foundation
Charter of Journalistic Ethic of Georgia
Youth for Justice – Georgia
The Center for Psychological and Medical Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture
Empathy, the Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Torture
Human Rights Priority
Human Rights Center