

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



The Joint Statement of the Civil Society and Religious Organizations

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The below signatory organizations express our negative attitude once again in terms of the draft initiated in the Parliament qualifying public expression of hatred towards sacred objects, religious organizations, clergymen or worshippers by an individual, aimed at hurting religious sentiments as administrative offence and envisaging subsequent administrative liability. In addition, illegal interference in divine service or religious rights or defile of religious constructions or other sacred objects, any inscriptions thereon or/and their injury should also be qualified as administrative offence.

We believe that Parliament should refrain from adopting the law since it falls short of Constitutional and international human rights standards. Its adoption is not motivated for protection of minority rights and in view of the Georgian reality it may be essentially harmful to this vulnerable group, as well as will put at risk freedom of expression in general.

It should be noted that prior to release of the statement, the council of religions under the Public Defender's Office also stated its negative position publicly. Great part of the member religious organizations signs the statement as well.

The statement is open for signature to all public organizations:

Georgian Democratic Initiative (GDI)
Institute of Tolerance and Diversity (TDI)
Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)
Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center(EMC)
Transparency International – Georgia (TI)
International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED)
Union "Safari"
Article 42 of the Constitution
ALPE
Media Development Fund
Liberty Institute
The Union of Georgian Muslims
Evangelical-Baptist Church
Christian-Adventist Church

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Evangelical-Protestant Church of Georgia

Evangelical-Baptist Church Madli

Friends' religious society – Kvakers