



The Statement of the Media Advocacy Coalition

Media Advocacy Coalition expresses its concern about the problem encountered in the process of manning the Board of Trustees of the Public Broadcaster of Georgia. Parliamentary majority and the minority had to nominate 6 candidates for membership of the Board of Trustees already yesterday, however the National Movement nominated only two candidates while the parliamentary majority submitted only one.

We think, that the activities of the public commission for selection of the candidates was distinguished for its high standard of impartiality, quality and transparency which generated public trust and interest to the reform of the public broadcaster. Great part of the population observed actively the interviews and debates broadcasted on the Channel 2 in live. After 10 days of activities, the public commission has submitted to the Parliament the list of 27 candidates.

It is absolutely unclear why the MPs failed to select the relevant number of candidates from the submitted list. The allegations and the conduct of the Parliamentary majority generate reasonable doubt that they are interested in introducing the control over the public broadcaster, rather than releasing it from the political bias. There is the risk that the ruling party will try to man the Board of Trustees under the political sign, by announcing the competition and setting up the new competition commission again.

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Media Advocacy Coalition calls on the MPs to respect the implemented work by the public commission and its choice, to abandon the narrow party and political interests and to fulfill their obligation in terms of selecting the candidates from the nominated list.

We would like to remind the Parliament of Georgia, that for the past years it was the first case of organizing the competition for selection of the members of the Board of Trustees of the Public Broadcaster in a quality and transparent manner. It is the first opportunity to man the board by the politically impartial professionals. We opine that the reform of the public broadcaster is the key test for the democracy in Georgia. If the process fails, the ruling party will cast a doubt not only on the veracity of pre-election message in terms of releasing media from the political influence, but will also jeopardize the state's democracy development.

Coalition member organizations:

1. *Open Society Georgia Foundation;*
2. *Georgian Young Lawyers' Association;*
3. *The Charter of Ethics of the Georgian Journalists;*
4. *Regional Broadcasters' Association;*
5. *Regional Broadcasters' Network;*
6. *Mediaclub;*
7. *Press Association;*
8. *Levan Mikeladze Foundation;*
9. *Institute for Development of Freedom of Information*
10. *Civil Development Institute*