



The practice of illegal administrative detentions continues in Batumi

Visual material: formula

The GYLA responds to the events of the peaceful protest in Batumi:

Based on the publicly disseminated facts it is known, that On June 3 at the Era Square in Batumi, At the rally aimed at declaration of solidarity with the illegally and arbitrarily detained human rights defenders in front of the parliament on June 2, 2023, 6 people were detained administratively, including two minors.

It is worrisome, that after Tbilisi, in Batumi, the freedom of expression and assembly continues to be illegally restricted by repressive police mechanisms. The footage shows the use of physical force by the police against several people (clashes, handshakes), as well as the facts of violent arrests. As can be seen from the footage, the rally participant was arrested for calling the policeman "shameful". Detention of individuals on such grounds is not new in the Georgian reality, although it is important

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to note that state bodies and civil servants are subject to wider limits of criticism than private citizens. When a person's actions at a peaceful demonstration are neither violent, nor intended to be violent, their administrative detention runs counter to the guarantees protected by the freedoms of assembly and expression.

In the footage, it is also clear how one of the detainees (who, as it turns out from the shouts of the people, is a minor) is probably being detained hands behind their backs, while their face is slammed to the front part of the car. In this regard, it is important to note that a widespread method of administrative detention is the use of rubber/plastic handcuffs during policing operations during demonstrations. However, in such a case, the police officer must warn the detainee that force/resistance may result in handcuffing and possible injury. Tight handcuffs can cause swelling, bruising, redness, numbness and other nerve damage, which in certain cases can reach the level of maltreatment. Such a warning does not appear in the video material.

GYLA continues to monitor the ongoing action in Batumi and calls on:

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs to immediately release the detainees and stop the practice of illegal detentions;
- Special Investigation Service - to study the facts of illegal detention of peaceful activists and abuse of authority by law enforcement officers;
- The Public Defender of Georgia, as the person supervising the protection of human rights in the territory of Georgia, to act with the mechanisms stipulated by his mandate and, among them, monitor the freedom of assembly and expression, the legal status of detainees on the ground.