



May 18, 2013

STATEMENT

On May 17, 2013, International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, following assault on the LGBT right activists and their supporters 17 people have been injured, including police officers and journalists. Some of the assailants have tried to rout the office of the Identoba - LGTB rights protecting organization. According to the Ombudsman of Georgia, "counter-activists, including clergymen, were acting aggressively from the very outset and were chasing the activists.

Their goal was not to express their protests peacefully, but to bodily harm the activists, there were instances of extremist outcries and hate-speech. They were deliberately pursuing minibuses that were used by the Ministry of the Internal Affairs personnel to remove activists from the scene, so it is obvious that the counter-protest has gone beyond legal framework".

International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia protest witnessed numerous incidents that would require appropriate response from the state. It should be noted also that Ministry of Internal Affairs failed to take adequate preventive measures.

Recent events make it clear that that systemic approach towards investigation is being carried out in rather vague way, so it would be extremely important for the state to start investigation of the events mentioned above as soon as possible. Accordingly, we urge the Ministry of the Internal Affairs and Prosecutor's Office of Georgia:

- To conduct efficient investigation of the May 17 events, treating all engaged persons in an equal way
- To identify violators by means of video materials widely spread following the events, start criminal proceedings against them and keep society informed about the investigation process
- To observe its obligations assumed under international agreements and to use convention standards in practice.
- To respect human rights and to take all appropriate measure to ensure non-infringement of fundamental rights
- To conduct activities that would ensure raise of awareness of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Prosecutor's Office's officers on homophobia and transphobia

The signatory organisations (the members of the Georgian National Platform):

1. Association "Green Alternative"
2. Georgia Press Association
3. Civil Society Institute
4. Human Rights Centre
5. "Women Enterprise" Fund Georgia
6. Open Society Georgia Foundation
7. Studio "Re"
8. Healthy World
9. Public Advocacy
10. United Public Movement "Multinational Georgia"
11. Institute for Development of Freedom of Information
12. Women's Initiatives supporting Group
13. United Public Movement "Multinational Georgia"
14. International Center on Conflict and Negotiation
15. IDP Association "Consent"
16. Association "MERKURI"
17. Georgian Trade Union Confederation
18. Repatriates' Union
19. Transparency International Georgia
20. Centre for Policy Analysis
21. Europe House
22. Article 42 of the Constitution
23. Foundation for Media Development
24. Institute of Democracy
25. Association for the Farmers' Rights Defense
26. Association DEA for Disabled Women and Mothers of Disabled Children
27. Caucasus Environmental NGO network
28. Penal Reform International
29. Heinrich Boell Foundation South Caucasus Regional Office
30. European Initiative - Liberal Academy Tbilisi
31. Coalition for Independent Living
32. Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development
33. Youth center – Georgia
34. Youth for Justice
35. Radio "Green Wave"
36. International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy
37. Institute for Policy Studies
38. Georgian Young Lawyers' Association
39. Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies
40. International Center on Conflict and Negotiations