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US DEPARTMENT OF STATE - GEORGIA 2020 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT Short Summary by GYLA

On March 30, 2021, the US Department of State issued its annual, 2020 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Georgia. Significant human rights issues included: serious problems with the independence of the judiciary, investigations and prosecutions widely considered to be politically motivated; unlawful interference with privacy; limited respect for freedom of peaceful assembly and association; and crimes involving violence or threats targeting LGBTI people.

The report also covers issues regarding weak checks and balances and a lack of independence of law enforcement agencies among the factors contributing to allegations of high-level corruption. According to the document, it has been assessed there were no effective mechanisms for preventing corruption in state-owned enterprises and independent regulatory bodies.

The US Department of State pays utmost attention to the human rights practices in the Russian-occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, where Russian guards restricted the movement of local populations. Significant human rights issues in the regions included: unlawful killing, unlawful detentions, such as the arrest of Zaza Gakheladze and Genadi Bestaev in 2019 who have not been released for the moment being, restrictions on movement, especially of ethnic Georgians, restrictions on voting or otherwise participating in the political process; and restrictions on the ability of ethnic Georgians to own property or register businesses. Russian []A of the administrative boundary lines increased, further restricting movement and separating residents from their communities and livelihoods. Russian and de facto authorities in both regions committed abuses with impunity.

In this paper, Georgian Young Lawyers [] Association (GYLA) tries to sum up the main

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findings of the 2020 US Department of State Report and points out at the key issues raised by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Public Defender Office (PDO), media and international community during the reporting period.