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# **GYLA Calls on the Office of the General Prosecutor of Georgia to Respond to the Case of Batumelebi Newspaper Journalist in a Prompt and Effective Manner**

According to Batumelebi newspaper, on November 20, 2011 a person who was blackmailing a coordinator of investigative team of the newspaper, Tedo Jorbenadze, was identified. It was the person who was trying to force Tedo Jorbenadze into cooperation with special services by means of blackmail on November 25, 2009, in the building of the Interior Ministry in Batumi.

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association was defending interests of Tedo Jorbenadze from the very beginning, calling for timely and effective investigation.

On November 20, 2011, Davit Devnozashvili was identified by an eyewitness of blackmail Ms Mzia Amaglobeli outside his apartment in Tbilisi, at 26 Dolidze Str. Mzia Amaglobeli called patrol police who was also accompanied by investigators. According to Mzia Amaglobeli, patrol police crew did not draw up a protocol on the scene, i.e. it did not document the fact. They verbally clarified that the investigation was ongoing.

The following day, with the assistance of GYLA, representatives of Batumelebi newspaper applied to Adjara A/R prosecutor Mr. Gizo Ugulava and Minister of Interior Affairs Mr. Ivane Merabishvili, requesting both agencies take appropriate action.

GYLA believes that officers of patrol police grossly violated legal obligations that they are abided by, as they did not draw up an act about the call or had Mzia Amaglobeli certify its accuracy with her signature. GYLA considers that failure of the police to fulfill their official duties will hinder objective and successful completion of the

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investigation. Moreover, it may further complicate the work of investigative authorities. Therefore, GYLA categorically demands:

1. the office of the General Prosecutor of Georgia to undertake prompt and timely actions for questioning identified individual and employees of the newspaper.
2. to undertake all necessary procedural measures against the identified individual to prevent him from evading investigation.
3. the Interior Ministry of Georgia to identify police officers who arrived on the scene and raise the question of their liability.
4. both agencies to keep public informed about the ongoing investigation into the offence committed against Batumelebi newspaper journalist Tedo Jorbenadze.