



## **“Coalition for Equality” urges the Independent Inspector to study the discriminatory and stigma enhancing expression made by Sergo Metopishvili**

Sergo Metopishvili, while discussing a video of the campaign "I want to trust Court A" in the social network Facebook, [mentioned](#) people with psycho-social needs in the discriminatory context. He has aligned psychosocial needs with a negative human trait such as a lie and thus contributed to portraying persons with psychosocial needs in the negative context. The Coalition believes that the assessment made by the judge member of the High Council of Justice of Georgia is extremely alarming, as it enhances the stigma existing in the society towards people with psychosocial needs and promotes unethical and frequently brutal attitude towards people with mental health problems.

People with psychosocial needs have been under great pressure for years and are excluded from the society, which is due to the lack of approaches and state policies oriented on respect for human dignity and human rights in the country. The court is perceived as the guarantor of stigmatized groups for restoration of their violated rights. However, in the given case, the representative of the judiciary system poses himself as a supporter of the stigma deeply rooted in the society, which is extremely

disturbing.

It should be noted that the behavior of a judge, whether he performs his/her official duties or other activities, constitutes an important basis for strengthening the judicial authority and confidence of the public to the court. Accordingly, it is important that respective agencies should provide a relevant assessment on the given fact.

According to the legislation, a judge may be imposed disciplinary liability if he/she breaches the rules of judicial ethics. Pursuant to the norms of judicial ethics, a judge shall behave in a manner to prevent damage to the prestige of the judiciary, and shall avoid any impropriety both in the court and outside the court. A judge shall, at all times, act in a polite manner and not use any words and expressions that insult, humiliate or discriminate against the parties.

The "Coalition for Equality" calls upon the Independent Inspector to initiate a disciplinary proceeding against the judge-member of the Council, Sergo Metopishvili for making the discriminatory and stigmatizing opinion.

### "Coalition for Equality"

The "Coalition for Equality" is a non-formal unity, which was formed in 2014 with the support of the Open Society Georgia Foundation and unites nine non-governmental organizations. The members of the Coalition are: Open Society Georgia Foundation, Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center (EMC), Article 42 of the Constitution, Union "Sapari", "Georgian Young Lawyers' Association", "Women's Initiatives Supporting Group "(WISG)," Partnership for Human Rights (PHR) ", "Georgia's Democratic Initiative (GDI) "and "Tolerance and Diversity Institute (TDI). "