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კვიციანს სახალხო
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წინადადებით
მიმართა

MIRTAG ASADOV'S APPLICATION BECOMES THE GROUND FOR THE PUBLIC DEFENDER TO ADDRESS EMZAR KVITSIANI WITH A GENERAL PROPOSAL

The Public Defender of Georgia, on the basis of an application of Mirtag Asadov, submitted a General Proposal to MP Emzar Kvitsiani, urging the MP not to encourage discrimination against any vulnerable groups and to abide the requirements of the Code of Conduct laid down for Members of Parliament.

Mirtag Asadov, with the assistance of GYLA, applied to the Public Defender's anti-discrimination mechanism in February 2019. The application stated that the MP applied a discriminatory expression against Mirtag Asadov at the meeting. In particular, the fact occurred on a meeting of the working group set up by the Committee on Human Rights and Civil Integration of the Parliament of Georgia on 21 January 2019 to which representatives of religious confessions, members of the

parliament, and representatives of the State Agency for Religious Issues, the Public Defender of Georgia and NGOs were invited.

Mirtag Asadov, in the capacity of the Chairman of the Supreme Religious Administration of Georgia's All Muslims and Sheikh, attended and delivered a speech in Azerbaijani language at the meeting of the working group. His speech was being translated into Georgian. Emzar Kvitsiani interrupted Mirtag Asadov's speech in Azerbaijani with the following words - "I couldn't hear who that is [meaning Mirtag Asadov]. I just can't understand, is he is a citizen of Georgia?" to which Mirtag Asadov responded that he is a citizen of Georgia. Following this, Emzar Kvitsiani addressed Mirtag Asadov: "Then talk to me in Georgian."

In the Proposal, the Public Defender notes that Emzar Kvitsiani's statement was a clear indication that a member of an ethnic minority who does not speak Georgian must be deprived of the right to express his opinion regarding the processes ongoing in the parliament and be involved in the country's political life.

Public Defender believes that such approaches promote the isolation of non-ethnic Georgians from the public sphere, which in turn contradicts the idea of integration of ethnic minorities.

Given that the full integration of ethnic minorities in the country's political and social life remains a challenge to Georgia, statements by politicians encouraging discrimination may negatively impact the development of democratic processes and the tolerant environment in the country. Therefore, the Public Defender emphasizes that public officials are obliged to understand their responsibility not to discriminate against minorities and to promote an equal and inclusive environment for all.

Based on the foregoing, the Public Defender considers that Kvitsiani's comment regarding Mirtag Asadov is the example of promoting discrimination on ethnic origin and addresses the MP to refrain from facilitating any discrimination against vulnerable groups in the future and to comply with the requirements of the Code of Conduct developed for Members of Parliament on 22 February 2019.

Mirtag Asadov's case was handled by the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association with the support of USAID / PROLoG.