



Two years from forced disappearance of Afgan Mukhtarli and unfinished investigation

On May 29, two years have passed since Afgan Mukhtarli, the Azerbaijani journalist disappeared from Tbilisi. Based on decision of the local court, he is serving his sentence in Azerbaijani prison up to today for illegal crossing of the border, smuggling and disobedience to police.

The investigation, launched by Georgian investigation authorities over the fact of alleged kidnapping of Mukhtarli is still ongoing without any progress. [Various requests](#) of Mukhtarli lawyers, including granting victim's status to him and his wife, have not been responded yet^[1].

Despite the [request](#) of more than 30 public and media organizations, the Parliament of Georgia refused to set up an investigative commission to study the fact of alleged kidnapping of Mukhtarli from Georgia.

European Court of Human Rights is reviewing the case of violation of rights of Mukhtarli

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as a priority; complaint that concerns violation of number of rights safeguarded by the Convention, is lodged against Georgia as well as Azerbaijan (Mukhtarli vs. Georgia and Azerbaijan, case 39503/17). The Governments of both states had to respond to the questions of European Court already. The questions to the Government of Georgia were regarding alleged kidnapping of Mukhtarli, as well as effectiveness of the investigation launched on the mentioned case.

Disappearance of Afgan Mukhtarli from Tbilisi and imprisonment in Azerbaijani prison had number of negative impacts on the image of Georgia on national as well as on international level. Partners of Georgia, such as [United States of America](#), [EU](#) and European Council, as well as [international non-governmental organizations](#), working on the Human Rights, have questions regarding the Mukhtarli case.

Successful completion of Mukhtarli case in the European Court, besides bringing the financial damage, will hurt the image of Georgia, as of democratic and oriented on human rights protection; and on the contrary, effective investigation of Georgian investigation authorities over the fact could avoid the additional damage to the country.

The undersigned organizations once more call on Georgian investigation authorities to take all appropriate measures to effectively investigate the case of alleged kidnapping of Afgan Mukhtarli, to identify all the involved persons and to impose respective responsibilities on them.

* 42 of the Constitution A represents Afgan Mukhtarli on national and international levels

Signatory organizations:

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA)

Human Rights Center

Article 42 of the Constitution

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Media Development Institute

Sapari

Georgian Centre for the Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims (GCRT)

Georgian Democracy Initiative (GDI)

Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center (EMC)

Democracy Reporting International (DRI)

Tolerance and Diversity Institute (TDI)

Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSF)

Partnership for Human Rights (PHR)

Media Development Fund (MDF)

[1] See. [REDACTED] of Afgan Mukhtarli, facts and assessment A Human Rights House Report, May 2018, available at https://hrht.ge/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GEO__Online.pdf