

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია  
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



## GYLA Statement on the violent actions that took place on July 5th

The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association condemns the violent actions of homophobic groups, the statement of the Prime Minister of Georgia made before the Government sitting, which encouraged further aggravation of the situation, as well as the inappropriate response of the Ministry of Internal Affairs as far as it failed to provide preventive work and effective management of processes. Accordingly, GYLA calls on the state agencies, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to ensure the peaceful conduct of processes, timely and effective suppression of violent groups, as well as properly fulfill the positive obligations imposed by the Constitution and protect the freedom of assembly and expression of protesters, as well as the safety of media representatives.

On 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021, at 18:00, a "March of Dignity" was planned by "Tbilisi Pride". The event was threatened by violent, homophobic, ultra-right groups, who gathered in the morning in the vicinity of Rustaveli Metro and Kashueti Church to demand the cancellation of the "Dignity March" in accordance with the call of the Georgian Apostolic Autocephalous Orthodox Church and various violent groups.[\[1\]](#)

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Aggressive groups resort to violent actions. They crossed the fence erected in front of the Parliament and dismantled the tents of the opposition representatives[2]. Homophobic groups also posed a significant threat to the media while covering the rally. They tried to expel journalists from the rally, which resulted in numerous cases of verbal abuse, assault and damage to equipment[3]. In addition, violent groups broke into the office of the "Shame Movement", where the organizers of the Pride were present[4]. Aggressive groups also came to the Tbilisi Pride office, climbed on the balcony and tore down the LGBTQ + flag.[5]

The statement made by the Prime Minister before the Government sitting is also alarming, in which he noted that the "March of Dignity" contains the threat of civil confrontation and considers it inappropriate.[6] The Ministry of Internal Affairs also publicly called on the participants of "Tbilisi Pride" to refuse to hold a march in public space on Rustaveli Avenue due to the scale of the rallies planned by the opposing groups. [7] **It is noteworthy that such statements made from heads of state and agencies and shifting of responsibility to peaceful demonstrators further exacerbate the already tense background, also incite violent actions by homophobic groups, and in fact give carte blanche to violence.**

**It is also noteworthy that the Ministry of Internal Affairs failed to ensure the effective management of the process and the mobilization of an adequate number of police forces, which further contributed to the aggravation of the process.**





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[7] "Statement of the Ministry of Internal Affairs", website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 05.07.2021, available at: <https://bit.ly/3dMkjH5>.