



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

Civil Society Forum

# Statement of Member Organizations of Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform regarding the case of Afgan Mukhtarli, Azerbaijani journalist

We, member organizations of Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Georgian National Platform hereby express our deep concern due to the suspicious disappearance of Afgan Mukhtarli, Azerbaijani journalist and activist. As declared by his lawyer, he was arrested by Georgian speaking persons in Tbilisi and illegally transferred to Azerbaijan through the border. In addition, he was suspiciously found

# საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



with 10 thousand Euros in pocket after being brought in the investigative body. Also, as stated by the lawyer, Mr. Mukhtarli has signs of physical injuries. Azerbaijan government charged Afgan Mukhtarli with the illegal crossing of border and transportation of contraband.

Afgan Mukhtarli has been living in Tbilisi for past two years' since he had to leave the country due to his critical opinions about the Azerbaijani government. Like Mr. Mukhtarli, many other journalists find shelter in Georgia since they have belief of protecting their rights in the country. It is unfortunate that Georgian authorities failed to ensure their safety.

Statements made by the representatives of government raise more and more questions. The society is not still aware of detailed information and it is not clear how did the journalist "disappeared" in Tbilisi end up in Azerbaijan investigation bodies, how did he pass the border while his passport was still in Georgia.

Considering the above-mentioned, the below signatory organizations categorically request immediate investigation of Afgan Mukhtarli case and punishment of guilty persons. In addition, we request the government to provide detailed explanations to the public. The Georgian authorities shall make political qualification of the fact. Such cases do hinder integration of Georgia into Euro-Atlantic organizations since protection of human rights is the key Western value, which has been placed under question in Georgia! We call upon the government to use all available resources and clarify the case to persuade public that living in Georgia is safe for everyone irrespective of his or her opinions in relation to the governments of other countries.

Signatory Organizations:

1. The Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics
2. European Initiative - Liberal Academy Tbilisi
3. European Fund
- 4.

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International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy

5. Georgian Young Lawyers' Association
6. Human Rights House Tbilisi
7. Union "Article 42 of the Constitution"
8. Institute for Development of Freedom of Information
9. The Economic Policy Research Center
10. The Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia
11. Human Rights Centre
12. World Experience for Georgia
13. Association "Toleranti"
14. Bridge of Friendship "Kartlosi"
15. Youth Initiative for Democracy
16. Association for Internally Displaced Women "Tanxmoba"
17. Multiethnic Resource Center on Civic Education Development
18. Civil Society Institute
- 19.

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Local Democracy Agency Georgia

20. The Greens Movement of Georgia/Friends of the Earth – Georgia
21. Association “Merkuri”
22. Youth Alternative
23. Studio Re
24. Union "Healthy Children"
25. Georgian Tea Producers Association
26. Development and Engagement Center
27. Youth Association “Droni”
28. Gori Information Center
29. International Center for Support of Research, Technologies and Innovations
30. Institute for Nationalism and Conflicts Studies
31. Scientific-Intellectual Club “Dialogue of Generations”
32. Association “School-Family-Society”
33. PMC Research Center
- 34.

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Center for Civil Development and Human Rights

35. Public Advocacy
36. Georgia Reforms Association
37. Levan Mikeladze Foundation
38. Joint Civil Movement "Multi-National Georgia"
39. New Generation – For the Democratic Georgia
40. Association "European Studies for the Innovative Development of Georgia"
41. Georgia International Development Agency
42. Georgia Alliance for the Safe Roads
43. Free Choice
44. Human Rights Center
45. Caucasus Network of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations
46. Energy Efficiency Center Georgia
47. Repatriate Union
48. Society for Support of Harmonic Development of Human
49. Foundation of Entrepreneur Women
50. Enterprise Innovation Development Center
51. Education Development and Employment Center
52. Georgian Press Association
53. Civil Council for Defense and Security Matters
54. Journalistic Research Center
55. International Center for Democratic Initiatives
56. Association "Green Alternative"
57. Junior Achievement Georgia
58. Center "Empathy"
59. Association "Peaceful and Working Caucasus"

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60. International Prison Reform
61. Coalition for the Independent Life
62. Women Information Center
63. Civil Forum
64. International Center of Geopolitical research
65. Center for Development of Civil Society and Democracy
66. The Association of Business Consulting Organizations of Georgia
67. Community Development Academy
68. National Anti-Violence Network
69. Association "Atinati"
70. Foundation "Genius Loci"
71. Georgia Association for Regional Broadcasters
72. Union "International Environment Protection Research Center"
73. Foundation "Caucasus Ecology"
74. Energy Efficiency Fund
75. Georgian Committee of International Press Institute
76. Union of Pedagogues "Education and Universe"
77. Association "Hope" – Movement of Internally Displaced Women for the Peace
78. Save The Future Generation
79. Georgian Association "Woman in Business"
80. Biological Farming Association "Elkana"
81. Georgian Trade Union Confederation
  
82. Railway Workers New Trade Union
83. Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi"
84. Youth Union Euro Club
85. Abkhazeti – My Home
86. Institute for Euro-Atlantic integration and strategic studies
87. International Organization of Human Rights protection and Prisoners social welfare
88. Samtskhe-Javakheti Regional Association "Toleranti"