

NO TO PHOBIA!

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION AND GEORGIAN DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

MAIN OBSERVATIONS OF THE WEEK

Following tendencies were noted during the period of 14-20 April:

- The main topic of the week still was parliamentary debate on the anti-discrimination law. The clergymen (Basil Mkalavishvili, dean; David Isakadze, dean; Elizbar Dekanoidze, dean) and some representatives of the non-parliamentary opposition (Jondi Bagaturia, Georgian Troupe; Aleko Shalamberidze, Free Georgia), and other respondents (Koba Narchemashvili, former Minister of Internal Affairs; Avtandil Ungiadze, Orthodox Parents Union; Petre Mamradze,

Strategic Research legalization Center) were associating the law with just one group – LGBT persons and legalization of same-sex marriages. Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee (Eka Beselia) was concentrating attention on the mechanism of interpretation of the law in the context of the Concordat, while her Deputy (Gedevan Popkhadze) stated that during the voting he would act in accordance with the decision of the Synod;

[Continued on p.2](#)

9, 14-20 APRIL



RESPONSE

16 APRIL

Complaint of the Georgian Muslims Union, MDF and TDI to the regulatory body of Rustavi 2

In our opinion, the story about construction of a mosque in Batumi aired by Rustavi 2 in the show *Post Scriptum* on 6 April misinterprets facts, makes mistaken conceptualization and misleads the viewers.



While in the beginning of the story the Chairman of the Georgian Muslims Union Kemal Tsetskhladze speaks about the problems the Muslims have in Batumi because of the fact that there is not enough space for prayers, which is farther confirmed by the scene of Friday prayers being held in the street, in the second part of the story the journalist presents the idea that construction of a mosque is not just a need of the Muslim citizens of Georgia but an obligation imposed by a neighboring state – Turkey.

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WWW.MDFGEORGIA.GE

WWW.GDI.GE



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MAIN OBSERVATIONS OF THE WEEK

Beginning from p.1

- During the live broadcasting of the holy fire ceremony from Jerusalem on 19 April on the Public Broadcaster the clergyman who had been invited as the commentator by the TV channel engaged in hate speech against LGBT persons in the context of the anti-discriminatory law (see the statement of the NGOs in the next issue);
- There were instances of hate speech against LGBT (Elizbar Diakonidze, dean) and the National Movement (Asaval-Dasavali newspaper);
- There was instance of incitement of hatred towards LGBT groups by a clergyman (David Isakadze, dean);
- Calls for violence against the National Movement came from the deputy rector of the Police Academy (Luka Kur-tanidze) and an individual freed from prison with the status of political prisoner (Revaz Kldiashvili);
- Instances of xenophobia came from the Georgian Troupe leader Jondi Bagaturia, and that of ethnic segregation by a clergyman (Petre Kvaratskhelia, dean);
- Turkey was again depicted as a threat (Obiektivi; Geworld.ge; Mamuka Areshidze, expert), including in the context of the NATO integration of Georgia;
- Anti-Western sentiments were noted again in the context of Ukrainian events and LGBT rights, with traditional media sources (Asaval-Dasavali, Geworld.ge) and respondents (David Isakadze, dean; Elizbar Dekanoidze, dean, Elizbar Javelidze, People's Council; Givi Sikharulidze, actor);
- Together with homophobic statements there were speculations that National Movement is planning provocations on 17 May, International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (Basil Mkalavishvili, dean; Asaval-Dasavali);
- Sources of sexism were both media (Kviris Chronika; Geworld.ge), and a respondent (Gela Pharchukidze, band conductor).

Examples of positive reporting:

- Rustavi 2 and Maestro reported on the Easter preparations of the Georgian Catholics (19 April);
- Event related to the 1443rd birthday of Prophet Muhammad was reported on by Interpressnews and Pirveli news agencies (19 April);
- The issue of racism in Georgia was discussed in the Tabula TV talk show Theorema, with black respondents being invited to take part in the show (17 April), as well as by the Kviris Chronika newspaper (14 April) which published an interview with a Nigerian student;
- Netgazeti published material on Identoba accusing investigator of the 17 May events of homophobia and demanding his removal from the case (15 May).

THE MAIN TOPIC OF THE WEEK—ANTI -DISCRIMINATION LAW

TABULA TV, PHOKUSI, 16 APRIL

GEDEVAN POPKHADZE, Deputy Chairman of the Human Rights Committee: "My religious identity is more important for me than being a parliament member."

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2313133&tracker=subscribe_log



ALIA, 17 APRIL

GEDEVAN POPKHADZE, Deputy Chairman of the Human Rights Committee: "If the Synod says not to support the law, I am a congregation member and I am really not going to get involved in a conflict with the Orthodox Church for there to be such reaction. So I won't support it, what can I do? Am I a madman to go against the Orthodox Church?"



PUBLIC BROADCASTER, MOAMBE, 17 APRIL

EKA BESELIA, Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee: "Not a single article in the anti-discriminatory law can be used against the constitutional agreement that exists between the state and the Orthodox Church."

<http://1tv.ge/news-view/67617>

ALIA, 18-23 APRIL

BASIL MKALAVISHVILI, dean:

„The anti-discrimination law is in fact legalization of homosexuality in Georgia! Each person whether government or parliament member or a regular citizen, who propagates or supports homosexuality in Georgia must be anathematized!.. 99% are ready to fight against this perversion and iniquity, from the Patriarch to a regular priest."

PUBLIC BROADCASTER, MOAMBE, 17 APRIL

DAVID ISAKADZE, dean:

"When we are talking about such great a sin called the Sodom-Gomorra sin, and which can be legalized in Georgia, we will necessary use this method, that members of the Holy Synod, congregation, society of our country all appeal to unmake this law and "anathematize all the people who

supports making homosexuality a norm in Georgia."

<http://1tv.ge/news-view/67617>

GEWORLD.GE, 16 APRIL

DAVID ISAKADZE, dean: „If anti-discrimination law is adopted we the clergy will be prohibited from preaching... Such recommendations are coming from Europe, that we cannot say that homosexuality is terrible sin. Later the same-sex marriages will be legalized, look, it's all moving permanently.“

Address of the clergy to the Government, the Prime Minister, the Parliament and the Parliament Speaker

„ We ask you to prohibit preaching of homosexuality and all the perversion in Georgia, such as LGBT parades and public marches...“

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5819>

Continued on p.4

THE MAIN TOPIC OF THE WEEK—ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW

REPORTIORI, 15 APRIL,

ELIZBAR DEKANOIDZE, dean : "This is not protection of their rights, this is violation of our rights. Don't Tina Khidasheli and Usu-pashvili have two children? Do they want any of them to be homosexual?! Is wife and husband better, or husband and husband, wife and wife?!"

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23333>

INTERPRESSNEWS, 16 APRIL

AVTANDIL UNGIADZE, Orthodox Parents

Union: "The proposed law turns sin into the norm."

<http://www.interpressnews.ge/ge/politika/278285-dekanozi-davith-isakadze-antidiskriminaciu-kanonproeqts-antikonstituciurs-utsodebs.html?ar=A>

ALIA, 17 APRIL

KOBA NARCHEMASHVILI, former MIA

Minister: "Human beings, with their empirical experience and life, have differentiated between evil and good, beautiful and ugly... This fact [homosexuality] was called bad thing in the past and till today the society has not been ready... Some groups and NGOs are interested in 17 May happening many times, but we don't need new 17 Mays".

ALIA, 16 APRIL

JONDI BAGATURIA, Georgian Troupe:

"This law legalizes the pervert sexual orientation of a homosexual as a moral norm... This is a sign of not just moral degradation, but a total national degradation too..."

By this norm not just same-sex marriage is legalized, but employment of gays and lesbians in kindergartens, or how do you imagine an army where commander is a homosexual? Or work of a homosexual in the penitentiary system? Remember, when they showed us the prison videos where employees of penitentiary are raping prisoners...

all these crimes were committed by homosexuals... This law will attach people to this perversion."

From the editors: "Let's say Bagaturia later discovers such a person in his party, why should not he expel him? If a person comes by lies and hid what he is, why should not he be expelled?.. A liar is a liar and why does it matter what is his orientation?"

REPORTIORI, 14 APRIL

JONDI BAGATURIA, Georgian Troupe:

„Those who, say, will be against their parades will break the law, according to this anti-discrimination law. If some same sex people want to wed in a church and a priest tries to stop them, then this priest also becomes a law breaker, because he violates their rights... Is this our European choice?!"

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23226>

REPORTIORI, 14 APRIL

ALEXANDER SHALAMBERIDZE, Free

Georgia: „If these remarks are not taken into account the rights of people of untraditional orientation will increase at the expense of the rights of other people.“

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23246>

REPORTIORI, 17 APRIL

PETRE MAMRADZE, Strategic Research

Center: „ In many countries homosexuals have a right to have sex with 12-year old children, if the child agrees. Remember, when invited teacher Fletcher in Zugdidi have children links for the pupils to watch his homosexual porno... I realize that everywhere there are homosexuals, but protecting their rights is one thing and propaganda is another. There must be nothing in this law that will help them in the propaganda of their way of life.“

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23547>

HATE SPEECH

REPORTIORI, 15 APRIL

ELIZBAR DEKANOIDZE, dean:

„The less there are people with perverted soul [LGBT persons] the healthier is the society... One hurting organ makes all body sick. Like an organ with gangrene needs to be amputated, the same must happen in this case. "

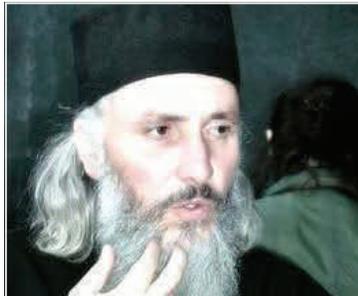
<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23331>



ASAVAL –DASAVALI, 14-20 APRIL

JABA KHUBUA, journalist: "Yes, for the Nationals – these death-sowing and Georgian man-raping zombies – it is great to be able to present themselves to people and say something!"

INCITEMENT OF HATRED



INTERPRESSNEWS, 16 ARIL

DAVID ISAKADZE, dean: "Adoption of this law may cause a great conflict. If this is EU's demand for us to have liberal visas with European countries, then we better have them not, rather than provoke a conflict between people by this, and cause such perversions as: homosexuality, pedophilia, incest, making same-sex marriages a norm".

<http://www.interpressnews.ge/ge/politika/278285-dekanozi-davith-isakadze-antidiskriminaciul-kanonproeqts-antikonstituciurs-utsodebs.html?ar=A>

CALL FOR VIOLENCE

ALIA , 15 APRIL

LUKA KURTANIDZE, Deputy Rector of the MIA Police

Academy: "If Saakashvili gets hit by 10 bullets, one of these bullets will certainly be from Luka Kurtanidze. One of the people who does not succumb to him and makes him answer will be Luka Kurtanidze. This does not concern Saakashvili only. There are many Saakashvilis in this country in the persons of Minashvili, Gabashvili, Ugulava, Taktakishvili... Let no one think that the fight is over. "



ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 14-20 APRIL

REVAZ KLDIASHVILI, a person released from prison with the status of political prisoner:

"We'll set our scores with the Nationals ourselves. If we have to take up weapons, we'll do just that."

XENOPHOBIA

KAVKASIA, DGES, 14 APRIL

JONDI BAGATURIA, Georgian Troupe: "Georgia is where they pray and write in Georgian, and if we let Turkish and Arabian and Mongolian banners on Plekhanov Ave., we'll get a small Turkey or Mongolia in the middle of Tbilisi".

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2309520

ETHNIC SEGREGATION

PRIME TIME, 18 APRIL

PETRE KVARATSKHELIA, dean:

"When the majority's rights are violated, this means it's a minority. How can others' rights be protected by those who either don't value or

misuse their own rights... When you make plebeians put of people of your own nation and nationality, protection of others' rights is just a game of pseudo-values."

ETHNIC STEREOTYPES

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 14-20 APRIL

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: "I pity our Tbilisi Kurds! – They will have to tear off so many Nationals turned into garbage from the asphalt of Rustaveli Ave.!"

UNFOUNDED PRESENTATION OF TURKEY AND AZERBAIJAN AS A THREATS

OBIKTIVI, NIGHT STUDIO, 16 APRIL

BONDO MDZINARASHVILI, anchor: "..."

This Turkey is a huge country. Our neighbors and those we must expect threat from are Russia and Turkey. We have no other threats around us."

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2312312

IMEDI, TIME OF POLITICS, 15 APRIL

MAMUKA ARESHIDZE, Caucasus expert:

"If we are going to prohibit Russian TV channels, we certainly must prohibit Turkish and Azerbaijani TV channels as well,

because often the information spread by them is not really for Georgia".

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2312032&tracker=subscribe_log

GGEOWORLD. GE 18 APRIL

IAKOB LEZHAVA, author: "Today we are all witnesses how Turkey absorbs Georgian lands, especially in Adjara and government is doing nothing to stop that. Tomorrow, after we join NATO, Turkish influence over Georgia (by entrance of the military forces too, under NATO auspices) will undoubtedly increase and the government, even if it wants to, won't be able to stand up to our NATO member

UNFOUNDED PRESENTATION OF TURKEY AND AZERBAIJAN AS THREATS

neighbor, which dreams about great Turkey and publicly stated its claims on Adjara many times. It is no secret that they have their eye on the rest of Georgia too. We know that they treat Georgians that go to work to Turkey like slaves, but they dare the same thing in Tbilisi – they don't let Georgians into the cafes on the main street of the capital, Turkish investors swear at the Georgian doctors and they even try to tear down the Patriarch's picture! Further advance of the Turkish arrogance will happen after we join NATO... It's easy to understand what we should expect in the near future because of NATO – the Turks brought in by the Nationals have got on our heads this way in 10 years, and when they come here in the name of NATO, they will turn us into Turkey finally. Most probably, in 2 or 3 generations we shall lose our language, faith and homeland!"

<http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5830>

ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENTS

ASAVAL-DASAVALI,
14-20 APRIL

ELIZBAR JAVELIDZE,
People's Assembly:

"Just like America and NATO dismembered Georgia on purpose, they are doing same thing to Ukraine!.. We Georgians could not be made into Romans, Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Turks, Russians, and I am sure they won't be able to make us into Americans and Europeans either!"

GIVI SIKHARULIDZE,

actor: "They are well-trained puppies of Soros. Dark forces of the world pay them a great lot of money to pervert and bury the history, culture, traditions of the small nations."

"I am talking about that rotten part of America where man can marry another man, and woman – another woman!.. When Angela Merkel, the Chancellor of Germany, this great country and nation with strong genes, went and congratulated her pederast foreign affairs minister with being married, I could not sleep that night! If such day awaits Georgia, then let my nation be damned, I don't want such a nation!"

GIORGI GIGAURI,

journalist: "However large money Western emissaries give Saakashvili and Co., they still won't be able to accomplish anything, besides leading several

hundred degraded and bribed sick people to the street!"

REPORTIORI, 15 APRIL

ELIZBAR DEKANOIDZE,

dean: "It was written in the documents which steps Georgia had to take to integrate into EU and NATO. One such step was to glorify these people with twisted morals, LGBT persons, and to guarantee them the opportunity to wage propaganda on TV, which is actually happening already."

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23333>



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author: "It's easy to understand what we should expect in the near future because of NATO – the Turks brought in by the Nationals have got on our heads this way in 10 years, and when they come here in the name of NATO, they will turn us into Turkey finally. Most probably, in 2 or 3 generations we shall lose our language, faith and homeland!"

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GEWORLD.GE, 18 APRIL

BIDZINA GOGOLADZE, resident of Akhaltsikhe: "We Georgians are being treated as if we have rented of our own land defended in wars from the Europeans... They don't leave us alone in our own home and treat us as if it were their merit that Georgian nation has reached the modern time and as if we cannot have a future without NATO, EU and these "unique" European values!..

In the existing situation it is important for us to get close to Russia... And the West does not want this, because if they lose this ancient Georgian territory they "have leased" to us they won't be able to use us the way they want to."

<http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5831>

GEWORLD.GE 16 APRIL

DAVID ISAKADZE, dean: „Of course he family is the union of a woman and a man, and the argument Ms Lunachek [EU Parliament member] is voicing can be used to justify incest too, so should we listen to such people?!“

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5819>

REPORTIORI, 15 APRIL

ELIZBAR DEKANOIDZE, dean: "It was written in the documents which steps Georgia had to take to integrate into EU and NATO. One such step was to glorify these people with twisted morals, LGBT persons, and to guarantee them the opportunity to wage propaganda on TV, which is actually happening already."

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23333>

HOMOPHOBIA

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 14-20 APRIL

KOTE KUBANEISHVILI, poet: "Gays and "bays" are all unacceptable to me, f*ck all of them who don't behave normally in Georgia."

GIVI SIKHARULIDZE, actor: "Yes, I don't want well fed naked girls dancing in the pubs, more than half of them lesbians, and guys – more than half of them pederasts in the full meaning of this word. I repeat – Georgia stands on immoral road!"

KAKHA MAMULASHVILI, producer: "Tradition of same-sex marriages will never be established in Georgia... There have always been Adam and Eve, or man and woman, otherwise there would have been Adam and Adamchick... I can never judge, but I really don't want my boy to come and say he is married to another man."

REPORTIORI, 16 APRIL

BEKA TSKHADADZE, initiative group member: "Events like the rally-concert that took place several days ago on the European Square, which was organized by the organizations that defend LGBT, must not be allowed by the government."

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23447>

REPORTIORI, 14 APRIL**JONDI BAGATURIA, Georgian Troupe:**

"Yesterday on European Square there was an event of LGBT and the Nationals called "We Choose Europe", by which they finally discredited Europe because what they want is not the choice of LGBT society."

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=23213>

**SPECULATIONS ABOUT 17 MAY****PIRVELI, 16 APRIL**

BASIL MKALAVISHVILI, dean: "They plan to bring a thousand gays from abroad for 17 May, for which they are requesting financing of 7 millions. They need this money to have a parade in the middle of the city; this is the plan of [Giga] Bokeria himself."

http://pia.ge/show_internet_daijest_news.php?id=248&lang=geo

ASAVAL- DASAVALI, 14-20 APRIL

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: "After about 10 days ago LGBT organization "Identoba" made a public statement that it was not going to stage a gay masquerade on Rustaveli Ave. on 17 May, the following question becomes more and more relevant for the Georgian society – won't Saakashvili's Nationals replace the fags' activists to stage

Ukrainian Maidan in the center of the capital of Georgia?"

OBIEKTIVI, NIGHTS STUDIO, 14 APRIL

NINO RATISHVILI, journalist: "What if I believe that there is tragedy in Ukraine and the so called president of Ukraine is telling me that he will probably personally lead the gay parade on 17 May?" ...

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2309493

SEXISM**ASAVAL- DASAVALI, 14-20 APRIL**

GELA PHARCHUKIDZE, band conductor: "The holiest thing and the highest idea for a Georgian is mother, if that stupid woman (Teona Kontridze) does not know that, no one needs just demonstration of her boobs, sitting as a member of jury, and instructions."

KVIRIS CHRONIKA, 14-20 APRIL

TAMAR OKRUASHVILI, journalist: "This is the country where a woman is a man and a fox is a chicken!"

GEWORLD.GE 18 APRIL

"Wishes of women have no boundaries, unlike men."

<http://www.geworld.ge/ViewGE.php?>

[G=10162&lang=ge&Title&fb_action_ids=758275617539495&fb_action_types=og.likes&fb_ref=.U1FqCtQGfjB.like](http://www.geworld.ge/ViewGE.php?G=10162&lang=ge&Title&fb_action_ids=758275617539495&fb_action_types=og.likes&fb_ref=.U1FqCtQGfjB.like)

Beginning from p.1

To illustrate this point the journalist shows an empty mosque in one of the villages in mountainous Adjara ("from the Turkish and Iranian center of Batumi we go up to an old Georgian village", "it is Friday and mullah enters the mosque alone "). This connection suggested by the journalist is unjustified, since existence of an empty mosque in mountainous of Adjara does not compensate the lack of space for prayers in Batumi, and is related to a different socio-economic issues rather than to the topic of the mosque construction. In this case there is a violation of Article 33 (2) of the Broadcasters Code of Conduct according to which, "broadcasters should avoid inaccurate and misleading statements regarding minorities and their social problems".

We also believe it is unacceptable to manipulate with footage and sound bite, the way it is done in the story after the part about mountainous Adjara. Specifically:

The journalist's (Tea Adeishvili) unfounded generalization that "in the villages, where Islam is stronger than in the city, people are upset that old unique mosques disintegrate, while Georgian Muslims want construction of a new one because of the interests of Turkey" is based not on the sound bite of the locals, but on a single comment of a representative of academia:

Ramaz Surmanidze, historian, professor: "Why a neighboring country [Turkey] should demand construction of mosques from us? If we need a mosque, we have people, society here, if they need it, they will build it and there will be a mosque".

Importantly, in this comment the respondent not only questions the need for the construction of a new mosque (which he spoke about himself in the beginning of the story), but also connects this construction to a demand by "a neighboring country" wit-

hout any arguments while the journalist not only does not try to clarify what and whose demand the respondent means, but also falsely presents this idea to be the position of the villagers.

We consider this a violation of the Broadcasters Code of Conduct, Article 14 (9), according to which "When editing interviews, recorded material, including an archive material, broadcasters should not distort a respondent's words or mislead the audience in any other way by video or audio manipulations, by changing the meaning of the questions asked, or using shots out of context"

We also believe that there is a violation of the Code's Article 13 (2) which stipulates that "broadcasters shall provide reliable and accurate information, shall not report any untrue or misleading information", and Article 18 (2): "the program or report will be considered biased if it lacks comprehensive information on important facts, is based on minor facts, misleads the audience intentionally or unintentionally, or conveys biased views of a person in a hidden form".

We believe that the story as a whole violates Article 32 (1) of the Broadcasters Code of Conduct, according to which, "broadcasters shall report accurate, reliable, balanced, proportional information on all cultural, religious, ethnic and social groups living in Georgia, with due regard to the principles of fairness and impartiality".

We call on Rustavi 2 TV company to review the stated instances of violation of the Broadcasters Code of Conduct, and on the 'Post Scriptum' editors to show more care while reporting on such sensitive topics in the future, avoiding discussion of the issues of the rights of citizens of Georgia belonging to various faiths in the context of a neighboring country, which promotes their alienation instead of integration.

