

NO TO PHOBIA!

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION AND GEORGIAN DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

RESPONSE

23 APRIL

10, 21-27 APRIL

COMPLAINT OF NGEs TO THE GEORGIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER'S SELF-REGULATION BODY

23 APRIL, 2014



On April 19, at 13:00 the Georgian Public Broadcaster (GPB) provided the live broadcast of the Holy Fire Easter ceremony with TV commentary of the event offered by representatives of Orthodox clergy.

The undersigned organizations of this complaint believe that by comments made during the live broadcast the GPB violated a number of provisions of the Law of Georgia on Broadcasting as well as the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters and the GPB's in-house Code of Conduct.



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MAIN OBSERVATIONS OF THE WEEK

The following tendencies have been observed during the week of 21-27 April:

- The anti-discrimination law again was connected to the LGBT community only by the clergymen (Elizbar Diakonidze, archpriest; Father Iotham, priest), non-parliamentary opposition (Jondi Bagaturia, Georgian Group; Shalva Natelashvili, Labor Party) and other respondents; Georgian Dream representative (Gia Zhorzholiani) called LGBT individuals by a pejorative term analogous to the English word "sodomites"; while

the Vice-Speaker of the Parliament forwarded the initiative to refrain from specifying the bases of discrimination;

- Hate speech was noted against LGBT in relation to the 17 May events by an official – Minister of Culture and Education of Abkhazia Dima Jaiani; also, there were expressions of hatred against National Movement (Asaval-Dasavali; Omar Nishnianidze, Georgian Dream) and Georgian writers (Levan Anjparidze, director; Asaval-Dasavali);

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MAIN OBSERVATIONS OF THE WEEK

Beginning from the p.1

- Incitement of anti-Western sentiments was related to unfounded statements about events in Ukraine being provoked by America and Europe (Asaval-Dasavali, Obiektivi), LGBT rights (Geword.ge), and representing Europe as enemy of the Orthodox religion (Obiektivi);
- Statements by the Georgian Patriarch about “propaganda of sin” and “life even lower than that of animals” contained hints about LGBT individuals and defenders of their rights;
- Speculations about 17 May have been noted by political scientist Soso Tsintsadze and newspaper Asaval-Dasavali;
- Discrimination of people suffering from the Down syndrome was observed in Asaval-Dasavali newspaper;
- Gender stereotypes were revealed in Rustavi-2 TV (talk show Position).

Examples of positive reporting:

- Both TV and online media gave plenty of coverage on the discourse related to anti-discrimination law, including Amnesty International evaluation of this bill;

- Internet portal Netgazeti and Tabula TV (talk show Phokusi, 24 April) gave full coverage of the EMC report on the frequenting of the acts of violence against Jehovah’s Witnesses;
- Netgazeti (22 April), during an interview with the Georgian Dream parliament member Guguli Magradze, touched the myths about EU that exist in the society, while response the respondent stated that EU does not demand legalization of same-sex marriages from its member and partner countries, and its various member states have different legal regimes in this regard;
- Interpressnews agency, Kavkasia TV and Maestro TV (26 and 27 April) covered an NGO report, according to which there was not enough action by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in response to incidents related to religious and sexual minorities;
- Rustavi-2 TV gave qualified coverage of the criminal incident in village Mughanlo, not revealing ethnic identity of the suspect.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW

KAVKASIA, BARIERI, 22 APRIL

GIA ZHORZHOLIANI, Georgian Dream: „Once again we hear the talk that this calls the high schools to necessarily hire sodomites, this is a lie... I am telling you, there are the rules that prohibit expression, propaganda of this and teaching this to the youths.“

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2327211

INTERPRESSNEWS, 27APRIL



MANANA KOBAKHIDZE, Vice-Speaker of Parliament: "... my question is why specifics is needed when we say that all people are equal and discrimination against people in any form is unacceptable. Let's take the relevant article of the Constitution when there are listed certain indicators and then is written "etc." "Etc." means that any sort of discrimination is unacceptable... by all indicators – including sexual orientation. This indicator is not written in the Constitution, but the norm against discrimination means this anyway, and if it means all indicators, including sexual orientation, why do

we need to be specific?!", o we need

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 21-27 APRIL

SHALVA NATELASHVILI, Labor Party:

"The regime representatives proclaim more solidarity with the sexual minority than with the majority. And now they are adopting this "anti-discrimination" law and if you happen to say something about sexual minority they will arrest you. Does not this directly contradict the important question asked recently by the Patriarch in his Sunday sermon – who will protect the rights of the majority?"

KAVKASIA, BARIERI, 22 APRIL-

JONDI BAGATURIA, Georgian Group:

"Georgian Dream, National Movement, LGBT community and defenders of the LGBT community are trying to force us to accept homosexuality as a norm..."

... According to the moral norms widely recognized by the society, homosexuality, for me, is an anomaly."



„...Sodomites, drug addicts and ones with other such identities must not have a right to work as teachers in kindergartens and schools, must not have a right to work in the penitentiary system, or national defense system.”

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2318602

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ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW

KVIRIS CHRONIKA, 22-27 APRIL

ELIZBAR DIAKONIDZE, archpriest: „I mean that anti-discrimination law which they did not have to make coincide with these Easter days. They don't believe in God and don't love Georgia, these people, so what can we? These are the people that love Karumidze! They claim Karumidze, Rati Amaglobeli and some Burchuladze have European vision“.

FATHER IOTHAM, priest: "I don't know this law but people look at it very negatively, I don't know whose government is this government... It seems this government is unacceptable to us too and they must follow the way of the Saakyan's government “

VLADIMER VASHAKMADZE, congregation member: „This is unacceptable, I can't imagine how a sodomite teacher of Georgian must explain 'Knight in the Tiger's Skin' to the students, I can't imagine how will he explain this or anything else... For example, let's take Vazha Pshavela [poet] when he says “It is as pleasant to look at as at young woman's groins.” But for a queer, I think, looking at groins is something which is not pleasant.“

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2320546

NETGAZETI, 28 APRIL

LEVAN CHACHUA, person freed from prison with the status of political prisoner: "Paying particular attention there to sexual minorities and gender identity means legalization of homosexuality in Georgia and those parliament members who vote for this law will commit an act against God and will have to answer before God and the people."

LEVAN CHACHUA: No it's not about legalizing gay marriages. It's about official representation of sexual minorities in all institutions that will necessarily happen in kindergartens, penitentiary system, public schools, police, army, etc."

ZAZA ODIBAISHVILI, rally participant: ..."I protest against legalization of Sodom-Gomorra in Georgia... Legalization of sin, of homosexuality... same-sex marriage... I mean legalization of sin".

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 21-27 APRIL

LEVAN CHACHUA: „I say loudly from the pages of Asaval-Dasavali that by adoption of this law, lobbied by Republican Party, the dictatorship of Sodom-Gomorra is established in Georgia!..

Now the Georgian society can imagine how people of such orientation will protect internal or external security of the state, imagine homosexual prison official or guard or homosexual police or army officer!"

KVIRIS CHRONIKA, 22-27 APRIL

ELIZBAR JAVELIDZE, People's Assembly: „They make us look at how they are killing Jesus again – those who support this bill in this new government!“

KAVKASIA, BARIERI, 22 APRIL

GELA NIKOLEISHVILI, lawyer: “That known Fletcher who was engaged in propaganda... You asked me what is propaganda, but explaining and showing in the positive light the same-sex relationship, sexual relationship in some district of Zugdidi – must he have such right or not?"

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2318602

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2318602

HATE SPEECH

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 21-27 APRIL

DIMA JAIANI, Minister of Culture and Education of the

Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia: "You non-men! Don't madden

the people or the last year's 17 May will seem a cakewalk for you! The gov-

ernment must do everything for the Rustaveli cinema, where for decades works of the great masters of our

culture were being demonstrated, not to be perverted by apologia of buggery!"



ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 21-27 APRIL

REZO AMASHUKELI,

poet: "How can the Georgian soil bear so many infidels, ugly persons, prostitutes and villains???"

GIORGI GIGAURI, jour-

nalist: "Can be a National considered to be a human being when despite the terrible crimes of Saakashvili and his bloody group he still supports this force?!"

SHALVA KHACHAPU-

RIDZE, lawyer: "I don't support killing and eradicating them, but until we cleanse Georgia of this sect we can't help ourselves!"

ALIA 25-28 APRIL

GELA ZEDELASHVILI, journalist: "We need three Nationals as examples, like Americans have Indians in the reservations, of what a politician must not be “.

OMAR NISHNIANIDZE, Georgian Dream: "I agree and demand to put Nationals into a flask with alcohol, keep them for centuries and explain to all generations that these were the destroyers of our country. I am a historian and understand well what a historical example means. I would keep their heads in alcohol for posterity with great pleasure."

LEVAN ANJAPARIDZE, director: "So we must not go away, we must mobilize and make this villain – Burchuladze, Deisadze, Karumidze, Shamugia and their brothers – to go away from Georgia themselves!"

DITO CHUBINIZE, journalist: "They [Georgian writers] from their youth stared at their own feces in toilet and all this is as close to them as filth to a swine!.. Yes, LGBTs or fags insulted Svaneti loved by Queen Tamar so much, when they put the statue of some horrible hellish thing instead of Queen Tamar in Mestia..."

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Beginning from the p.5

Great Konstantine Gamsakhurdia could not know that those like crazed Lasha Bugadze, Zaza Burchuladze, Zurab Karumidze and Erekle Deisadze would attack with their dirty pens our holy things – parent-child relationship, Orthodox religion, Queen Tamar...

A man who thought and wrote such a thing may be himself a pederast."

ANTI-TURKISH SENTIMENTS**ALIA, 23 APRIL**

Headline of a news about trafficking in Alia newspaper (23 April) - „Georgian slaves in Turkey. The real stories of the trafficking victims " – incites anti-Turkish sentiment.

ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENTS**ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 21-27 APRIL**

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: "These "MeiDowns" [compilation of Ukrainian Meidan and the word of "down" meaning genetic disorder]– Grygany, Klichko and Yatseniuk have been doing what America-Europe told them so much that Russia has already cut off Crimea from Ukraine."

OBIEKTIVI, NIGHT STUDIO, 27 APRIL

TAMAR KIKNADZE, political scientist: "USA executed a usual regime change, brought to power people acceptable to them?! Turchinov is a Baptist, Yatseniuk is God knows who, etc. So the current elite in Ukraine does not really represent the interests of Ukrainian people."

VALERI KVARATSKHELIA, anchor: This man [Carl Bildt] spread the statement two days ago that Putin is a bad man and Russia is a bad country because they protect Orthodox religion, and Orthodox

religion is bad because it protects the institution of family and hinders... what they call it? LGBT community?.. 17 May is coming closer... There is information that they plan to bring 1000 gays, I don't know, some hired ones".

TAMAR KIKNADZE, political scientist: "They say directly – Orthodoxy is not the religion supportive of democratic processes and development of institutions... and if you choose this European way, you will have to think about this religion. Are you ready to reject Orthodox religion which is the same thing as your identity?!"

VALERI KVARATSKHELIA, anchor: "So they won't strangle us, we'll strangle them (about NATO enlargement).

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ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENTS

OBIEKTIVI, NIGHT STUDIO, 23 APRIL

Viewer [phoning-in]: "I believe that we must apologize to the Russians because we stood beside these bastard Americans and hit them in their back... There is no worth thing in the world than America."

TAMAR KIKNADZE, political scientist: "Until someone says that this EU and NATO are dead, and we must look at things through that angle, we probably cannot be helped".

<http://www.obieqtivi.net/tv1.php?id=16709>

<http://www.obieqtivi.net/tv1.php?id=16710>



OBIEKTIVI, NIGHT STUDIO, 23 APRIL

LISTENER [telephone call]: "...When they speak about Europe... Russia is really an occupant and aggressor, yes, but I don't want to look at women with tattoos on TV, I don't want to look at men with earrings, and that it's all full of pederasts".

SAQINFORM, 23 APRIL

"After Kiev – Baku: On Sunday, 27 April, Saakashvili flew into Azerbaijan where he will try to stage provocations ordered by US which is afraid after Ukraine to lose its influence in the Caucasus too".

<http://saqinform.ge/index.php?>

[option=com_content&view=article&id=18592:---27-----](http://saqinform.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18592:---27-----)

[&catid=98:politics&Itemid=457#ixzz2znd3mSA7](http://saqinform.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18592:---27-----&catid=98:politics&Itemid=457#ixzz2znd3mSA7)

SAQINFORM, 23 APRIL

Taft – a career diplomat... in Georgia (in 2005-2009), where they nicknamed him "bullshit" because despite calls for democracy he always supported Saakashvili in all crimes of those years (war against his own citizens in August 2008, bloody suppression of a rally in 2007, unlawful mass murders, extortion from businessmen, murder of Prime-Minister Zhvania, and others).

http://saqinform.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18602:2014-04-23-10-00-16&catid=99:actual1&Itemid=419#ixzz2zneolNYH

GEWORD.GE, 24 APRIL

LEONTI BITSADZE, engineer-economist: "Until we get free from slave's attitude to Europe and America, we can't be helped. We must understand "that at least half of EU Parliament consists of adventurers, grafters, homosexuals, lesbians, people who don't have the record of any positive activity in their own states » (A. Chachia, book II, p. 98, 2013).

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5834>

KVIRIS CHRONIKA, 22-27 APRIL

TEMUR SHASHIASHVILI, Tetrebi movement: „We are crying out loudly NATO and EU, and they laugh at that. Those who are in NATO and EU dream about leaving and they wonder what's wrong with us?.. Two years ago Hungarians rejected European recommendations and wrote into their Constitutions that family is a relationship between woman and man, our Prime-Minister spoke about this too and they call this turning back on Europe.”

SEXUAL MINORITIES

PIRVELI, 23 APRIL

Material's headline "The first transsexual ambassador in UN? – what the sex-changed men dream about" is misleading since the content of the article itself which is about a transsexual model who dreams about becoming a diplomat.

INTERPRESSNEWS, 21 APRIL

ILIA II, the Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church: "Our modern mode of life got heavier and ill, because there is massive incitement of the propaganda of sin. There has never been such a large-scale attack of the evil before... and the modern pseudo-liberalism wants to destroy the notion of sin... They attack morality, which today means battling not just religious rules, but general values of humanity as well. In fact, they offer society the way of life lower than that of animals even, and push it towards total moral degradation".

<http://www.interpressnews.ge/sazogadoeba/278602-ilia-meore-thanamedrove-fsevdoliberalizms-surs-mospos-cneba-codva.html?ar=A>

RUSTAVI 2, POST SCRIPTUM, 27 APRIL

AN OLD LADY: "I's a village here, that's why everyone was surprised... He/she was quiet before becoming an ill person [transgender person Bianca]."

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2320558

SPECULATIONS ABOUT 17 MAY

KVIRIS PALITRA, 21-27 APRIL

UTA BITSADZE, journalist: "May the Nationals try to imitate Maidan and make allies in the present government?"

SOSO TSINTSADZE, political scientist: "Our President is an idler and has a role of a playboy... visiting a rally is a normal thing for him. To overwhelm his inferiority complex he may appear on the 17 May parade and defend minorities together with the police."

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 21-27 APRIL

ZAZA DAVITAIA, journalist: "Despite constitutional changes initiated by the Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili the National Movement and LGBT organizations keep pushing their agenda and plan to propagate immorality using a new method on 17 May this year. At the same time they plan to adopt another shameful law."

GENDER STEREOTYPES

RUSTAVI 2, POSITSIA, 25 APRIL

NINO SHUBLADZE, journalist: "Despite the fact that you are a lady [Eka Beselia]... I will start with Mr. Nugzar because your leader has already spoken".

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2320388

DISCRIMINATION OF PEOPLE WITH THE DOWN SYNDROME

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 21-27 APRIL

HEADLINE: "MAIDOWN"

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: „The headline of this article does not mean insulting people with the Down syndrome... Maidown is a synthesis of Maidan and the English word „Daun“.

RESPONSE

23 APRIL

Beginning from the p.1

While commenting the religious ceremony, a cleric talked about the Anti-Discrimination Law which the Parliament of Georgia passed in its first reading and in this light, he made discriminatory statements about LGBT persons and used offensive terminology ("perverted relationship"). Comments indicated that equalizing sexual minority with ethnic and religious minorities, including their labour rights, is unacceptable for the Orthodox Church and the adoption of the law will end up in confrontation between citizens.

Statements made by the cleric commentator - "this will be an offence to our belief and traditions of our church and nation and will definitely lead to clashes among nation", "because of these sins people will be punished with rain of sulfur and fire" - incite hatred towards LGBT persons.

Article 16 (a) of the Law on Broadcasting obliges the GPB to "ensure editorial independence, the fairness and impartiality of programs and guarantee that the latter are free from state, political, religious or commercial inf-

luence," which was not observed in this case.

GPB violated the Article 31 of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, defining the principles of diversity, equality and tolerance and Article 33 "Guidelines for diversity, equality and tolerance". Namely, "Broadcasters shall refrain from publishing any material likely to incite hatred or intolerance on the grounds of race, language, gender, religious convictions, political opinions, ethnic origin, geographic location, or social background (Article 31)"; "Broadcasters should avoid causing offence to any religious, ethnic or other groups by using, among others, certain terminology and images (Article 33.3)".

TV channel also violated the Code of Conduct of the GPB, preamble of which declares the following principles: **Public values** - "We should exercise a high degree of responsibility when covering issues that might be harmful and offensive for certain groups of the society"; **Diversity** - "We should ensure fair reporting of issues related to minority groups"; **Equality** - "

We should avoid discrimination of people on the grounds of their religion, ethnicity, race, gender or sexual orientation".

Article 15 of the GPB's Code of Conduct provides detailed regulations how to avoid discrimination on various grounds as well as recommendations how to cover religious programs and the topics related to sexual minorities; these regulations were not observed by the channel in this particular case.

It is a widespread practice in media to invite commentators for broadcasting different events. On such occasions, for the aim of observing the law and codes of conduct, "Requirements to authored programmes" (Article 17 of Code of Conduct for Broadcasters) apply to anchors of different events. In this particular case, the GPB violated Article 17 (2) of Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, according to which "presenters of authored programmes should not use their position to report opinions in a way that may violate the impartiality of the programme."

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Beginning from the p.9

We call on self-regulation body of the Georgian Public Broadcaster:

- To review our complaint and assess the violation of particular articles of the Code of Conduct.

We recommend the management of the Georgian Public Broadcaster:

- In order to prevent such incidents in future, to inform invited commentators in advance about provisions of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters and only in case of mutual agreement, take a decision to cooperate with a particular author;
- Although both codes of conduct (broadcasters' and GPB's) contain anti-discrimination provisions, in light of

this case, we recommend the GPB that in order to ensure effective of western countries, including the guidelines of live output of BBC mechanisms for avoiding risks associated detailed regulations based on the experience of western countries, including the guidelines of live output of BBC which is a constantly updated document.

- Media Development Foundation, MDF**
- Tolerance and Diversity Institute, TDI**
- Identoba**
- Georgian Young Lawyers Association, GYLA**
- Human Rights Education and Monitoring Center, EMC**
- Women's Initiatives Supporting Group**
- Women's Fund in Georgia**
- Safari**
- Article 42**
- Nino Bolkvadze**

DISCUSSION AT “DIVERSITY SCHOOL”

On April 26 Tamar Kordzaia, member of the Parliament delivered the lecture on “Freedom of expression and the role of media in democratic society” at Diversity School.

Alongside students of the Diversity School members of Akhaltsikhe Youth Engagement Center attended the lecture. The meeting was followed by discussion.



