



Main Findings of Monitoring

29. 07 –15.08

This monitoring covers the period from 29 July to 15 August and has revealed the following tendencies:

MONITORING

Same-sex Marriage in Electoral Dis- course p. 4



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- Main topics of the reported period were a court trial of religious servants participating in the break up of the rally against homophobia and transphobia on 17 May; and a campaign No to Same-Sex Marriage initiated by the Christian-Democratic movement as part of its pre-election campaign;
- The coverage of the court trial by media was unbalanced, providing positions of religious servants and their supporters alone; the position of prosecution was not reported at all. None of media outlets have provided footage featuring the episode of acquittal of one of religious servants, whilst some media outlets (Channel 9, Kavkasia TV) described this episode in a text incompletely, focusing on swearing by the priest alone and not threats made by him ("I will kill you...") which was featured in a video released via social networks and some TV channels;
- Anti same-sex marriage campaign of the Christian-Democratic movement was covered without a critical approach;
- Racist statements were made by journalists (newspapers Kviris Kronika, Asaval-Dasavali);

Continued on p. 2

Inside this issue

MDF Statement	2
The court trial of religious servants	3
Same-sex Marriage	4
Racist Expression	5
Restriction of land ownership on the ground of citizenship	6
Religion	7
Sexual Minorities	8
Gender Issues	9

Main Findings of Monitoring

Continued from p. 1

- Anti-Turkish attitudes were observed in relation to not only concrete persons but also the assembling of a minaret in the village of Chela, Adigeni district (Asaval-Dasavali newspaper);
- Discriminative statements about the sale of land to foreigners were made by religious servants (Davit Isakadze, Union of Orthodox Parents) and politicians (Koba Davitashvili, a presidential candidate); a clear cut editorial stance in this regard was revealed by *Rezonansi* newspaper in which the vision favoring the restriction of the sale of lands to foreign citizens dominated the materials published on this topic – be they articles, columns or comments of separate persons, with the opposing view rarely provided;
- A report of Imedi TV concerning a suspect in murder being an Iranian citizen can be regarded as the incitement of hatred on religious ground (see MDF's statement). Even though the TV company responded to a statement of the Georgian Muslims' Union via social networks, the TV company did not correct the misleading information in a due manner as required by the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters and indicated in the MDF's statement dated 3 August;
- Maestro TV's inquiry into a conduct of traditional Muslim prayers after the incidents in the village of Samtatskaro was an example of positive coverage, as well as reports by Maestro and Imedi TV on Ramadan Bayram;
- An issue of sexual minorities was again exploited in a political context – alongside the United National Movement, the Republican Party was also mentioned in this regard;
- Gender discrimination was seen on the part of both respondents (Georgian Dream MP Zakaria Kutsnashvili) and journalists (*Kviris Kronika* newspaper).

MDF statement regarding the TV story aired by "Qronika" on August 1

3 August, 2013

Media Development Foundation, MDF expresses its concern regarding the TV story aired on August 1 in news at 20:00 by the TV Company "Imedi," concerning the murder of Mariam Kochalidze in Batumi, stating that this murder was committed on religious ground. Without verifying the information, the editorial aired the statement of victim's mother made on emotional background and stating that the alleged murderer conducted the ritual of sacrifice.

We welcome the fact that the TV Company "Imedi" responded to the address of the Georgian Muslims' Union calling on media to avoid spreading unchecked, one-sided information that could encourage hatred and promote negative stereotypes related to Islam. However, we believe



that the response of the TV Company was not sufficient due to the following circumstances:

TV company "Imedi" in the statement sent to Media.ge dissociates itself from the assumption expressed by Mariam Kochaladze's family members and notes that it does not represent the position of TV "Imedi". It is also noted in the statement that "neither news anchor, nor the journalist have attempted to interpret this version" which in our view is incorrect because in the brief news of "Qronika" at 20:00 the anchor of the news program announced without indicating the source: "The ritual of sacrifices and conflict on religious background. New details in the crime story from Batumi". By this statement, the editorial assessed the incident which is being investigated, as a religious conflict and offered sacrifice as a confirmed fact.

TV company violated the regulations of the articles 13 (1,2) and 14 of the Code of Conduct for

Continued on p. 14

The court trial of religious servants

GPB, Rustavi 2, Imedi, Channel 9, Kavkasia TV, 1 August



Anthimos Bichinashvili on May 17 Counter-Rally

The media coverage of the court trial of two clergymen and three civilians, charged for violently thwarting a planned peaceful rally to mark the international day of fight against homophobia and transphobia on 17 May, was again dominated by positions of the defense and supporters of the clergymen. An exception was only Imedi TV company which covered the acquittal of Archimandrite Anthimos Bichinashvili and the resumption of the trial against other persons on 15 August, only by short actuality, without any comments.

Every TV channel noted that the judge deemed materials presented in the case as insufficient evidence against Anthimos Bichinashvili whilst Channel 9 and Kvakasia TV said in journalists' texts that the video footage in the court case included episode showing how this religious servant was swearing. None of media outlets released the video showing this episode, in which Anthimos Bichinashvili was not only swearing but also threatening participants of the rally ("I will kill you..."), thus allowing viewers to evaluate the reliability of arguments presented at the court trial.

Media outlets did not provide the position of the prosecution and did not inquire whether the state prosecution intended to appeal the acquittal of one of the charged persons with a higher court.

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http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2106413 ; http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2109909; http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2106422; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWdjeVMHwWk>; http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2109723; http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2106422

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 29 July – 4 August

Nino Burjanadze, presidential candidate of the People's Council: "I want to express solidarity with those clergymen who might displayed excessive emotionality on 17 May, but they did not do even the tenth of what was done against people on 26 May."

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/980/980.pdf>

Alia newspaper, 2-5 August

Jondi Baghaturia, Kartuli Dasi: "A proceeding was instituted against innocent clergymen. That was a political order from the family of the chairman of parliament – Khidasheli and Usupashvili. Giga Bokeria and his wife Tamar Chergoleishvili were openly involved in this process."

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 29 July – 4 August

Giorgi Gigauri, journalist: "Let's say straightforwardly that the trial of Orthodox priests on charges of violating the rights of sexual pervers and their supporters is not only absurd but is a great shame!"

"Every patriot of Georgia must principally stand up to a targeted and well-organized campaign pursuing the aim of transforming our country into homosexuals!... If we allow and put up with the wanton march of homosexuals and lesbians on the Rustaveli avenue; if we turn a blind eye to an open propagation of homosexuality then we will be "promoted" to an upper step of legalizing same-sex marriages and allowing gay families to adopt children!"

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/>

Same-sex Marriage in Electoral Discourse

An initiative of the leader of Christian-Democratic Movement, Giorgi Targamadze, to collect signatures for a constitutional amendment for legalizing traditional marriages and, as Targamadze declared, preventing same-sex marriages, was covered by news programs in an identical manner. The only exception was a report in the Imedi TV news program on 6 August, which along with the positions of the initiator of the issue and politicians, provided the positions of the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association and the defender of LGBT rights, the Identoba NGO.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2109043

None of media outlets has noted in the background information that the legalization of same-sex marriage has never been put on the agenda in Georgia and no group has ever made such a demand. Journalists have not even put a question on this hypothetical issues to initiators of the prohibition of same-sex marriage either, which is an example illustrating that media spreads information on any issue which it is offered without any criticism.

Moreover, at a meeting in Kobuleti, Giorgi Targamadze unjustifiably linked the issue of same-sex marriage with Georgian fighters killed in Abkhazia and Shida Kartli.

Giorgi Targamadze, presidential candidate from Christian-Democratic Movement: *"It is especially important to remind ourselves today why and for what our compatriots fought and died not only in Abkhazia and Shida Kartli but also across the entire Georgia. They fought to save not only their families but also to save the national dignity and to maintain the national identity."*

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2113413

Maestro TV news program

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2118167

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2112497

GPB news program

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2109030

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2111788

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2112413

Imedi news program, 6, 10, 12, 14 August

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2110970

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2112393

Kavkasia Tv news program

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2120885

Rustavi 2 news program

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2120882

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2115586

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2114937



Obiektivi TV talk show Gamis Studia, 6 August

In response to a question of the presenter Nino Ratishvili about Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili's statement that a same-sex marriage is not on the agenda, Giorgi Targamadze says:

Giorgi Targamadze, presidential candidate from Christian-Democratic Movement: *"Subtext was the following: by our cultural development we have not yet reached that level as to deal with civil liberties of this scale. For me, it is not part of civil liberties."*

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2110056

The respondent evaluates the behavior of clergymen during the 17 May events and portrays sexual minorities as a threat.

Giorgi Targamadze: *"Why has the Georgian clergy assumed this difficult mission?.. Because some subconsciously and the majority of them absolutely consciously discern, see and evaluate this threat."*

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2110071

Newsletter №16



Giorgi Targamadze, Christian-Democratic Movement: *"Why has the Georgian clergy assumed this difficult mission [May 17 counter-rally]?.. Because some subconsciously and the majority of them absolutely consciously discern, see and evaluate this threat [homosexuality]."*

Racist Expression

Kviris Kronika newspaper, 12-18 August

Tamar Okruashvili, journalist: *“At that moment a nigger passed by and told us hello in Georgian!”*

“F..ck. your hello! – calmly responds an old person as if guessing what I have in heart. – Who brought them here? Misha and his people, didn’t they? That [UNM MP Giorgi] Kandelaki again. Our country has become their homeland.”

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 12 – 18 August

In the information which concerns a detention of a citizen of Cameroon in Georgia, a journalist uses pejorative term “nigger”.

Giorgi Gigauro, journalist: *“Saakashvili’s regime has unjustly tried even a nigger.”*
<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/982/982.pdf>

Ethnic Minorities

GPB and Rustavi 2, 10 August

News programs of both TV companies portrayed a conflict between Adjarian ecomigrants of the Tiva village and ethnic Dagestanis of the Mtisubani village (Kvareli district) on various daily issues (pig growing, putting up a sign) and on the selection of a place for erecting a cross, as an ethnic conflict. A GPB presenter, in presenting the report underlines, among other motives, a religious ground of the conflict, thereby dramatizing the situation. It would be desirable for the anchor, when presenting a sensible issue, to limit herself to reporting claims of the parties alone. The GPB report also noted that the Minister for Reintegration got involved in the settlement of the conflict, but it did not provide the position of the minister.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2111019
http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2115583

Obiektivi TV talk show Gamis Studia, 7 August

Gia Maisashvili: *“There is a home of Georgians which they looted and a nation oriented on looting and theft [he speaks about Russia-Georgia war]”..*
<http://www.obiektivi.net/tv1.php?id=13201>

Anti-American Attitudes

Obiektivi TV talk show Gamis Studia, 12 August

A viewer, phoning in: *“If we look at America’s history, they massacred locals and then resettled there from Europe and brought there negroes from Africa; if memory serves me well, local Indians remain only in several states... We have a great history and no one can blind us by any means. They dare to tell us such things, let them take Akhalaia... also Vano Merabishvili with them and we will send brooms to them along with these people.”*

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2115104

Anti-Turkish Attitudes

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 29 July – 4 August

Jondi Bagaturia, Kartuli Dasi: *“Moreover, Georgian children from the educational institution owned by Giuli Alasania and Putulah Gulen are taken to Turkey where they are taught that Georgia is merely part of Turkey and that we Georgians seized it from Turkey with the help of Russia.*

Continued on p. 6



Tamar Okruashvili, journalist: *“At that moment a nigger passed by and told us hello in Georgian!”*

“F..ck. your hello! – calmly responds an old person as if guessing what I have in heart. – Who brought them here? Misha and his people, didn’t they? That [UNM MP Giorgi] Kandelaki again. Our country has become their homeland.”

Ethnic Minorities

Yes, for example, textbooks are printed in Turkey saying as if Adjara and Samtskhe-Javakheti are parts of Turkey... Those children were educated at madrasahs and then brought back. Thus, in reality, a caste raised by Turkish ideology, carriers of Turkish interests, was trained in Georgia!.. Yes, through monies of radical Islamists not only higher educational institutions are established in Georgia but also secondary schools and kindergartens and all these are under the control of Giuli Alasania."

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/980/980.pdf>

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 12-18 August

Elizbar Javelidze, people's Council: "Saakashvili opened up a door of Adjara to Turks and allowed them to inundate it!"

"Saakashvili is so much skilled in steering the Turkish expansion in Georgia that Adjara seemed not sufficient for him and with the active leadership of his mother, Giuli Alasania, allowed to open Turkish kindergartens, schools or universities across Georgia!"

Giorgi Gigauri, journalist: "By the way, several days ago a 24-meter high minaret, brought from Turkey, was erected next to the mosque in the village of Chela!"

Elizbar Javelidze: "Yes, indeed, Turkey dreams not only of getting a foothold in Ajara but also in the entire Southern Georgia too."

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/982/982.pdf>

Newsletter №16

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 29 July – 4 August

Giorgi Burjanadze, anticorruption union: "Prostitutes have done their job in Turkey, now it is time for free slaves. There is a serious hunt for Georgian males, as cheap workforce, in Turkey."

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/980/980.pdf>

Restriction of land ownership on the ground of citizenship

Imedi news program, 3 August

A report was about an article of the former deputy justice minister, Tina Burjaliani, in which she speaks about unconstitutionality of the moratorium on the sale of land to foreign citizens and in this context, about a precedent set by the Constitutional Court. The chair of committee for sectoral economy assesses Burjaliani's position as a misinterpretation of the legislation.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2107176

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2107174

Rustavi 2 news program, 3 August

Koba Davitashvili, a presidential candidate: "I intend to put forward an initiative about amending the constitution to allow private ownership of agricultural lands for Georgian citizens alone, in order to ensure that the Georgian land is in the hands of Georgians and not Indians, Chinese or Egyptians."

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2109916

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 5-11 August

Davit Isakadze, Union of Orthodox parents: "A tendency of sale of Georgian lands to foreigners needs to be urgently dealt with and stopped... If a solid mechanism for protecting the sale of land is not created speedily, we will soon become guests in our own homeland!"

Rezonansi newspaper, 5 August, 29 July

Under the title "Land is the property of the Georgian nation" the newspaper published an address of the chairperson of the Foundation for the Revival of Georgian Village, Elene Kakhniashvili, to the government, in which she demands that the land be nationalized and draws unjustified parallels between the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the sale of land to foreigners.

http://resonancedaily.com/index.php?id_rub=7&id_artc=16671

The newspaper publishes a letter written by legislators of various times, who deem the sale of land to foreigners as something incompatible with the vital objectives of the country and interests of the society.

http://resonancedaily.com/index.php?id_rub=7&id_artc=16583

Religion

GPB news program, 31 July

A report was about allegations made by the Bolnisi deputy governor that he had been physically offended by employees of the local council and humiliated on the religious ground. The report provides positions of all parties.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2105226

Kviris Palitra newspaper, 29 July – 4 August

Alike Imedi TV (see, the MDF statement concerning the report of Imedi TV news program), a material published by the newspaper regarding the killing of Mariam Kochaladze, in committing which an Iranian citizen is accused, names a religious sacrifice as one of the motives of the crime. It is noteworthy that this theory, which belongs to a godmother of the deceased person who speaks about that being under emotional stress, also includes a xenophobic statement towards Iranians in general.

Nato Kvintradze, Mariam Kochaladze's godmother: *"We demand that no Iranian enter Georgia... Mariam was a pure Christian. I think the murdered sacrificed her."*

No doubt that any theory has the right to exist but a journalist must refrain from directly spreading emotional statements and take reasonable precautions to verify such assumptions, including, by approaching investigative bodies.

<http://www.kvirispalitra.ge/justice/18103-mariam-kochalidze-mkvileis-icnobda.html>

Maestro news program, 10 August

It is important that Maestro followed the topic of Muslims' prayer in Samtatskaro not only during the incidents but thereafter too. It produced a short actuality, based on the Kakheti Information Center, about the fact that after 9 August the prayers were not conducted in the village. In the actuality a deputy mufti of the Muslim Administration, Adam Shantadze says that because of pressure and threats Samtatskaro Muslims no longer go to the praying house to pray.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2111043

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 12-18 August

A journalist, Giorgi Gigauri, based on a regional newspaper Samkhretis Karibche, describes a confrontation caused by the installation of minaret

to the mosque in the village of Chela, Adigeni district. Religious servant of the Zarzma Monastery is quoted:

Nikoloz Getsadze, clergyman from Zarzma Monastery: *"Is it Iran here to hear in Zarzma Monastery call from minaret?! Our cathedrals are in Turkey and our Catholicos Patriarch has yet failed to achieve agreement on a number of issues and now they want us to applaud and to turn a blind eye to their behavior?!"*

Based on the above mentioned materials, a journalist engages in unfounded generalization of Turkish expansion in Georgia and incites anti-Turkish sentiments.

Giorgi Gigauri, journalist: *"Nor should we turn a blind eye to the fact that our neighbor Turkey does not spare power or money for a religious expansion in Georgia. As you see our neighbors have already started up a rather useful and profitable business of 'portable minarets'!"*

The title of the article itself, "Assemblage of 24-meter-high minaret rapidly and cheaply, or who incites religious conflict in Adigeni?!", is offensive towards Muslim citizens of Georgia.

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/982/982.pdf>

Ramadan Bayram

It is a positive fact that Maestro and Imedi TV channels reported about the events of this Muslim holiday in their prime time news programs.

Maestro TV news program, 29 July

Presidential candidate from the Georgian Dream coalition, Giorgi Margvelashvili, congratulating the Bolnisi population of Azerbaijani origin.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2104027

Imedi TV news program, 1 August

Tbilisi Mayor Gigi Ugulava congratulating Azerbaijani citizens of Georgia living on Baazov Street.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2111783



Giorgi Gigauri, journalist: *"Nor should we turn a blind eye to the fact that our neighbor Turkey does not spare power or money for a religious expansion in Georgia. As you see our neighbors have already started up a rather useful and profitable business of 'portable minarets'!"*

Sexual Minorities

Kviris Kronika newspaper, 12-18 August

Gela Zedelashvili's article "Why LGBT defenders sue the minister of health care?" is about a claim filed with the constitutional court, in which they demand the annulment of the order of the health minister which restricts the blood donation from homosexuals. The article is entirely homophobic and portrays homosexuals as diseased people.

Kviris Kronika newspaper, 29 July - 4 August

The article is about a resolution of the US association of psychologists, according to which psychotherapists are prohibited from recommending homosexuals to cure homosexuality, which is followed by a homophobic evaluation by the journalist:

Mikheil Sakhvadze, journalist: "...In other words, to persuade [homosexual patients] that homosexuality is not a problem at all and that they are ordinary members of the society. Thus, if we share the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, then we must not be surprised about anything!"

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 29 July - 4 August

The newspaper publishes an address of the editor-in-chief of news-agency Sakinformi, Arno Khidirbegishvili, to the Chief Prosecutor, in which he demands that a proceeding be instituted against Rustavi 2 TV company for homosexuality propaganda and breach of the rights of Christians, heterosexuals and minors. As the ground he indicates the translation of the MTV's program Room Riders broadcast by Rustavi 2 in the morning, in which, according to the editor-in-chief of Sakinformi, homosexuality was promoted.

Arno Khidirbegishvili, editor-in-chief of Sakinformi: "All these was accompanied with their [homosexuals] appalling naturalistic gestures."

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/980/980.pdf>

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 29 July - 4 August

Giorgi Gigauri, journalist: "However, the link between Saakashvili's United National Movement and LGBT movement and their identity is so obvious that this cannot be

erased by erasing video files!.. Yes, It was exactly Saakashvili's UNM that organized the 17 May provocation which was designed so that to have indignant and offended Georgians kill a homosexual and then the UNM would shout loud for the entire world to hear that a homophobic government came to power in the country!..

"I hope Lesbians will not feel offended if a letter in the acronym denominating them will be replaced by National Movement and will be read as Naitonals, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual!"

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/980/980.pdf>

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 29 July - 4 August

Giorgi Gigauri, journalist: "Up to 100,000 Georgians that took to the Rustaveli avenue on 17 May to protest against homosexuality and at least 20 times as many Georgians who remained at home, await a response from Bidzina Ivanishvili to one simple question: How will he make the Georgian Dream come true alongside with anti-Georgian Republican Party which hates Georgians?!"

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/980/980.pdf>

Kviris Palitra newspaper, 29 July - 4 August

Givi Sikharulidze, actor: "A photo of such a male who asks a woman for a certificate confirming that she is a virgin, must be posted in the street as of a queer... Unfortunately in a country where men marry men and women marry women, nothing can surprise me any longer. In such a perverted world everything may happen and what one must be surprised about?!..

"Shame on that nation which wants to jail priests who took to the street to protest against gay pride while queers walk around freely. Now this perversion is being imposed on us..."

I think a certificate confirming masculinity must be introduced because the country has

Newsletter №16



Arno Khidirbegishvili, editor-in-chief of Sakinformi: "All these was accompanied with their [homosexuals] appalling naturalistic gestures."

Sexual Minorities

become full of queers... Homosexuals and pervers cannot be threatened by anything. They will threaten the world soon...

<http://www.kvirispalitra.ge/public/18030-givi-sikharulidze-qme-thu-mkithkhavth-vazhishvilobis-motsmobac-unda-shemoighon-pederastebith-gaivso-qveyanaq.html>

Kviris Kronika newspaper, 29 July - 4 August

Kakha Mikaia, Protect Georgia: “Akhalaiia and his milieu raped goats, cows, pigs, men; they are political gays. Even more, the United National Movement is the political LGBTs”...

Kviris Kronika newspaper, 12 - 18 August

Giorgi Korkotashvili, radio anchor: “I can’t understand why they deal with LGBT?! The law must prohibit them from conducting a parade. How is it possible that members of the government promote them?!... If you allow me, I will go to the Mayor’s office and ask Gigi Ugulava to allocate a territory for LGBT on the Gladi waste dumping ground, where they can conduct their parades...”

Asaval-Dasavali newspaper, 5 - 11 August

Davit Isakadze, Deacon: “We have already started collecting signatures to outlaw marches which demonstrate perversion... Such marches, which they wanted to organize on 17 May in Tbilisi,

is a prelude to then demanding the legalization of same-sex marriage and incest!

If the government thinks nation-wise, it must support the creation and development of families and not promotion of orgies and perversion.”

<http://www.asavali.ge/archive/asdas/2013/981/981.pdf>

Anti-Western attitudes

Obiektivi TV talk show Gamis Studia, 1 August

A viewer, phoning in: “I cannot understand Western values. In Europe children at the age of nine are explained how to do love with a representative of same sex... When Switzerland, the West accepts incest... Georgia cannot live with these values and in general, a political party which says that our path is towards the West, is doomed to failure.”

Davit Tarkhan-Mouravi, Patriots’ Alliance: Certain groups of people try to impose on the world this new ambiguous moral... but this is not, in general, a Western value... people who are trying to establish this vice and absolutely harmful moral norm and ideology in Georgia. The United National Movement is a pro-Turkish organization.”

<http://obiektivi.net/tv1.php?id=13110>



Giorgi Korkotashvili, radio anchor:

“I can’t understand why they deal with LGBT?! The law must prohibit them from conducting a parade. How is it possible that members of the government promote them?!... If you allow me, I will go to the Mayor’s office and ask Gigi Ugulava to allocate a territory for LGBT on the Gladi waste dumping ground, where they can conduct their parades...”

Gender Issues

Maestro, Imedi, Channel 9, 30 July

A protest of an independent feminists group against the issuance of certificates by Levan Samkharauli Bureau of Expertise for the aim of detecting a virginity of a woman, was covered in news programs of Maestro, Imedi and Channel 9. The group was voicing its protest against the institutionalization of the breach of women’s right.

Reports aired by Imedi TV and Channel 9, included, among others, a comment by the chairman of the Georgian Dream parliamentary faction which is discriminatory in terms of gender.

Zakaria Kutsnashvili, Georgian Dream: “I think that the main certificate of virginity is that issued by a husband. The husband is the key person issuing this certificate and therefore, if the husband,

Continued on p. 10



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www.facebook.com/pages/მედიის-განვითარების-ფონდი-MDF-Media-Development-Foundation/275686875901735

MDF statement regarding the TV story aired by "Qronika" on August 1

Continued from p. 2

Broadcasting obliging broadcasters to ensure the reliability of sources and accuracy of facts, to prevent airing of incorrect or misleading information; Also there was the violation of the regulation 2 of Article 18, which states: "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."

The editorial did not take reasonable steps to verify the accuracy of the facts reported. The crime committed on religious backgrounds is an aggravating circumstance by the Georgian legislation, however the journalist had not rechecked with official investigation the version provided by the victim's parent and addressed for the comment the victim's godmother. The Code of Conduct for Broadcasters obliges a broadcaster to recheck information with at least two separate sources: "Broadcasters, as far as practicable, should rely on first hand sources and gather information themselves. As a rule, broadcasters should not rely on a single source but seek to obtain information from other sources." The emotional condition of the victim's family members is natural and understandable, but media should be very careful with the expressions made in such circumstances and air such sensitive topics only after rechecking the facts, in order to avoid misleading the audience.

In addition the news program of TV "Imedi" violated Article 31 of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, stating that "Broadcasters shall refrain from publishing any material likely to incite hatred or intolerance" on the grounds of religious convictions, as well as the Article 33. According to the regulation 1 of Article 33 "Broadcasters should avoid drawing unjustified parallels between ethnic or religious origin and negative events, including associating activities of specific individuals with the entire group." In case of TV "Imedi" the incident was qualified as a religious conflict in a completely unjustified manner.

Taking into account the numerous facts of violation of the regulation of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters, we believe that the respond of the TV company 'Imedi' to the appeal of Georgian Muslims' Union is insufficient. We call on this TV media:

- To correct important factual mistakes publicly and immediately through a proportional means and forms, scheduled appropriately, as required by the Article 13 (3) of the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters.

And we call on media:

- Report on such sensitive themes with more accuracy and protect the norms and regulations stated in the Code of Conduct for Broadcasters aimed at ensuring "that any broadcasting licensee and especially, the public broadcaster be equally responsible for observing standards of professional ethics and be accountable to the public as being necessary to protect ethics and human values, strengthen social consensus and promote tolerance in a democratic society".
http://imedi.ge/index.php?pg=prs&id_pr=619&id=20; http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2106416

Gender Issues

Continued from p. 9

as the main issuer of the certificate, is interested to involve lawyers and experts [in establishing this], we cannot prevent him from doing that. Thus, let us look at this issue less seriously."

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2106419
<http://www.tv9.ge/?l=G&m=1&sid=0&id=5370>
http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2104161

Kviris Palitra newspaper, 29 July - 4 August

A journalist's formulation of a question regarding the issuance of a certificate of virginity by the expertise bureau is discriminatory when she uses a phrase such as "girls with

suspicious past."

Manan Bochoidze, journalist: "It also happened that girls with suspicious past managed to cheat their future husbands who are obsessed about innocence of their future wives. What do you think, is a certificate not needed in such cases either?"

<http://www.kvirispalitra.ge/public/18030-givi-sikhamlidze-qme-thu-mkithkhavth-vazhishvilobis-motsmohac-unda-shemoighon-pederastebith-gaivo-qveyanaq.html>

GPB news program, 6 August

A positive example was the report about problems faced by women living on occupied territories, produced in the villages of Ergneti and Khurcha.

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2109025

