

NO TO PHOBIA!

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION AND GEORGIAN DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

Monitoring Results

During the period of 3-9 March the following themes were topical:

- Hate speech against the National Movement members by a clergyman (Elizbar Diakonidze, dean in the Trinity Cathedral), also approval of lynching by an official (Dima Jaiani, Minister of Education and Culture of Abkhazia) were revealed;
- Sources of ethnic discrimination were mostly respondents (Nodar Natadze, People's Front; Tamar Khatiaashvili, citizen);
- Both journalists (*Asaval-Dasa-vali* newspaper) and respondents (Gigla Baramidze, Democratic Movement) made unfounded references to the ethnic origins of Ukrainian and Georgian political leaders, in other cases media also indicated ethnic origin without any ground (*Kavkasia* TV, *Rezonansi* newspaper);
- In the article about land ownership (*Rezonansi* newspapers), concerning grievances the locals have against foreign farmers, journalists presented neither position of the foreign investors, nor provided any evidence that the sale of the land was illegal;
- During the discussions about developments in Ukraine there were references to unjustified threats and construction of a mosque in Batumi was mentioned in this context (David Tarkhan-Mouravi, Patriots' Alliance). There were also attempts to promote anti-Turkish (Irina Sarishvili, Imedi Party) and anti-American sentiments, with the journalist using a biased interpretation of history in the modern context (*Geworld.ge*), also mentioning sexual minorities' rights in the negative context (*Geworld.ge*);
- The anti-Western discourse was mostly based on the incorrect interpretation of the terms of Association Agreement with the EU, LGBT rights, developments in Ukraine, and the topic of ID cards;
- In the news concerning grievances of the population of Khobi about construction of the Kingdom Hall position of the Jehovah's Witnesses on this issue is not represented (*Interpressnews* news agency). Thus, the religious minority is regarded as an object, not a subject of the journalist's story;

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3, 3-9 March



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Monitoring Results

Beginning from the p.1

- Religious discrimination were expressed both by media (*Kavkasia* TV), and respondents (Elizbar Diakonidze, Trinity Cathedral dean; Giorgi Germanidze, Global Tendencies Research Institute);
- Both media (*Asaval-Dasavali* newspaper) and respondents (Nodar Mgaloblishvili, actor) described the May 17, International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia as a gay pride and attempted to mobilize society against it;
- Political speculation about the sexual orientation of the EU Ambassador in Georgia was made by media (*Alia* newspaper, *Pirveli* news agency);
- *Rezonansi* newspaper expressed gender stereotypes, when it reported on the nomination of a Ukrainian singer and Maidan activist Ruslana for the US State Department International Women of Courage Award in the entertainment rubric.

Examples of Positive Reporting:

- The story in the 8 p.m. *Moambe* news program of the Public Broadcaster (9 March) about teaching of the state language in the Azeri-language schools and the pupil's integration process, also the news story in the 8 p.m. *Qronika* of Imedi TV (4 March) about the joint cultural event of the Georgian and Jewish women;
- Reporting in the *Prime Time* newspaper (3 March) on the fact of ethnic discrimination, when certain guests were not invited on the presentation of Azerbaijani magazine "Nargis" because of their Armenian origin.
- Publication in *Netgazeti* web-portal (6 March) about the meaning of International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Hate Speech

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 3-9 March

DIMA JAIANI, Minister of Education and Culture of Abkhazia: "It is better for Vano Merabishvili to stay in prison as long as possible, because there is a huge line of people ready to slaughter him!.. The people will not forgive this gang anything! When the court does not do its

job people themselves take its functions in their hands, and take the swords of justice in their hands too! And woe to those, who will get under this sword!"

QRONIKA, 3 March

ELIZBAR DIAKONIDZE, Trinity Cathedral dean: „You lie, lady Tamar [Chergoleishvili], Bokeria is an atheist and would not touch St. Nino icon even to bring it to you.

He would through that icon to a corner. Bokeria is rubbish in spirituality, everyone knows this and out of the here archbishops I don't think a single one is against Bokeria. Why? Not because they like Bokeria's ideas, but because they want their pockets to remain full. Nowadays you cannot fill your pockets if you do not serve the devil."

Ethnic Discrimination

REZONANSI, 3 March

NODAR NATADZE, People's Front: „It is also a treason... that they settled Turks in Batumi, tried to create Chinese towns in Tbilisi and Anaklia “.

QRONIKA newspaper, 3 March

TAMAR KHATIASHVILI, citizen of Mtskheta: „Mtskheta is not for Georgian anymore, so we asked – is this town for the Chinese and Turks? They said they were paying money to them, so yes“...



Unfounded Statements about Ethnicity

REZONANSI, 7 March

VAKHO SHAMUGIA, journalist: "On 6 March Tbilisi City Court sentenced the Dagestanians arrested in Georgia, ethnically Avar cousins Mikael Kadiev and Rizvan Omarov to 2 years in jail each."

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 3-9 March

GIGLA BARAMIDZE, Democratic Movement: "For Saakov [Armenian surname] to bark about human rights and for Emzar Kvitiani to sit in jail – is this the Georgian project of restoring justice?"

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 3-9 March

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: "Yulia even made her hair in Ukrainian style, but the modern photography betrayed Grigyan [Armenian surname]:

on Yulia's picture made on a Maidan tribune it is clear that her Ukrainian hairstyle is of a fairer color than her "natural" hair... I am sure that due to an old and close friendship, Yulia Grigyan offered Saakyan to be his "Doctor Dot".

PUBLIC BROADCASTER, Moambe, 9 March

A story about social problems of the eco-migrants living on a former military base contains sound bite of one of the eco-migrant about demand by a Greek citizen of Georgia living in Tsalka to vacate his house. It was not specified in the story that the eco-migrants had only temporarily been let into the ethnic Greeks' houses in Tsalka.

Otar Bolkvadze, village Gantiadi: "We live in a Greek's house in Tsalka. The Greek owner came and said we must leave the house, where shall we go?"

<http://1tv.ge/newsview/65055>

KAVKASIA, Spektri, 5 March

DAVID AKU-BARDIA, anchor: "They have brought the Chinese and let them work there, they employ Chinese proletariat, spending our money."

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2278644

Ownership Dispute

REZONANSI, 6 March

An article covers grievances about pastures in various regions of Georgia. The journalist describes the population's complaints towards Indian and Chinese farmers, speaking about the problem one-sidedly, without showing position of the foreign investors and the Ministry of Economy, and without any journalistic investigation makes a general statement that the previous government sold the lands illegally.

MARI CHITAIA, journalist: "Population has problems with the Indian farmers. They have neighboring agricultural lands, not letting the locals to come close. The former government illegally sold 80% of agricultural land in Vejini to the Indian farmers and took the land of the locals".

Ukrainian Events – Unjustified Statements on Threats

Geworld.ge, 4 March

IRINA SARISHVILI, Imedi Party: "Crimea will not stay in Ukraine... Turkey will rule in Crimea and if you don't know what will follow it, ask your parents... Some people may know what it brings to Georgia – no one will remember Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region then, there will be new problems, especially since our homeland is already filled with the Turkish "businesses" and serials!!! Maybe someone thinks it is support of Ukraine that they will give out Turkish passports there?!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

<http://www.geworld.ge/ViewGE.php?G=9171>

Geworld.ge, 5 March

DAVID MKHEIDZE, journalist: "...We see that Russia does not back away, and we will see how much is really worth the threat by the global chief of LGBT-pederasts, how far will US go... They say Putin is inadequate - Obama complained before making his threats. What must Putin do – open NATO bases in Russia, accept a pederast parade on the Red Square, and then he will be adequate?"

OBIEKTIVI, Night Studio, 8 March

Valeri Kvaratskhelia, anchor: "[about demonstration of the Ukrainian flag during the Sukhishvili dance ensemble concert] Everyone has a right to sing and dance where they want, but to hold the Ukrainian flag in a demonstrative way today, which is not really Ukrainian flag, but belongs to the fascists... there was a fascist coup in Ukraine, Bandera's followers have come, they do not hide their fascist ideas, right?.. That I think is a bit too much"...

<http://obieqtivi.net/tv1.php?id=16076>

Geworld.ge, 4 March

GIORGI VEKUA, journalist: "Unfortunately mass media spread among the Georgian population an idea that US is our country's "strategic partner" and does not meddle in our internal affairs. In fact, this is a lie which can be proved by examples of other countries..."

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Ukrainian Events - Unjustified Statements on Threats

Today there are good conditions created for activating such organizations in Ukraine [secret terrorist organizations]. Under the pretence of neutralizing the Russian threat US and its allies will almost totally annul Ukraine's sovereignty and will make this country a territory for the activity of their intelligence services and secret networks... That is why the anti-fascist forces will have to mobilize and clear the territory under their control from suspicious elements." <http://www.geworld.ge/ViewGE.php?G=9175>

OBIKTIVI, Night Studio, 3 March

DAVID TARKHAN-MOURAVI, Patriots' Alliance: "If we the Georgian people don't take serious actions now, situation in Georgia will certainly become very tense [re: development in Ukrain]... That's why we expect volunteers in the Cinema House, on the 3rd floor... Like we solved the Turkish problem in Adjara, we surveyed 60 000 people, and both Georgian Muslims and Orthodox rejected that issue, that construction of mosques, because everyone knew that it was supposed to be not a mosque, but an intelligence center. Many things were not said there, that tensions were being prepared there, serious clashes were planned, but we passed that calmly and the country was saved".

Anti-Western Sentiment

ALIA, 6 March

SHORENA GOGOLADZE, journalist: "The source who talked to the Patriarch personally after his meeting with Fule tells Alia that there was tense talk between the Patriarch and the European Commissioner..."

The Patriarch does not know the whole text of the initiated document, but he knows about several points. For example that Georgia must decide the issue of Turk-Meskhetians, it is also written about regional languages in the document, that it must be solved, and that is what the Patriarch is against.

They talked about another point of the initiated document, concerning the work of the EU Commission. The Patriarch is definitely against this. He stated his position to the Commissioner. It is about the work of the EU Commission which will define the way of life and economic issues for us, but in fact it will define our policies. This Commission is considered the parallel government of Georgia and that is what the Patriarch opposed."



Meeting of Stefan Fule with Ilia II

Obiektiv, Night Studio, 4 March

SOSO MANJAVIDZE, Patriots' Alliance: "Stephan Fule said that initialing of the agreement text with EU does not mean that EU will force Georgia... that these same-sex marriages will become a law. He also said that the Georgian people have guarantees, their own traditions, values, and so EU will not force to influence this somehow. He also said he is ready to meet the Patriarch. We must understand what these statements are result of... It is a result of the Georgian society's activities..."

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Anti-Western sentiments

Beginning from the p. 5

It was directly said that if such rough pressure continued and we were made to make a choice between same-sex marriages and other “fascinating” things or EU membership, the Georgian people would say no to EU and Europe in general and choose directly northern vector of political orientations... Do we want a male to marry other male and the state to be obliged to register this? And even more, right? Adopting children and thousand other things of this type? We say we don't want this, do we? 99% don't want this, right?"

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2277168

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2277188

REPORTIORI, 6 March

LILU MIROTADZE, journalist:

„Stephan Fule told the Patriarch that protection of the rights of the people with untraditional sexual orientation and freedom of their personal life is a sign of tolerance, and that nobody was making us to reject our traditions and make same-sex marriages legal. The Patriarch told the Commissioner directly that the content of the document is unacceptable for the Georgian society concerning recognition of the regional languages and the so called parallel government. The Patriarch does not know the whole text of the initiated document, but he knows about several points. For example that Georgia must decide the issue of Turk-Meskhethians, it is also written about

regional languages in the document, that it must be solved, and that is what the Patriarch is against."

[http://www.reportiori.ge/?](http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=18974)

[menuid=3&id=18974](http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=18974)

Geworld.ge, 5 March

GURAM PIRTSKHALAVA, actor: "I am sure, there [EU Association Agreement] are definitely written such things that will provoke a very aggressive reaction in the Georgian society. For example, about rights to hold gay parades, same-sex marriages, etc. Authors of this document and those who signed it know better than us that people won't accept it by any means, so the “solution” is only one – they must hide it and keep it away from the attention of the common people".

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5697>

Geworld.ge, 5 March

JUMBER PATIASHVILI, former Secretary of the Central Committee of the

USSR Communist Party: "There are people and regions in Georgia who want to live with us, but don't want to bring European principle in their families. They say that Ukraine's Prime Minister is of suspicious orientation. Nobody wants a country lead by a person with untraditional orientation. Nobody wants Western values in the form that we are offered."

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5696>

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Anti-Western sentiments

ALIA, 5 March

NINO SAMKHARADZE, journalist: "We have painful reforms ahead, a re-creation of the Georgian mentality... We must suppress our emotions when they make sexual minorities equal to us, and make other religions equal to the Orthodox religion. In many cases we will have to reject those Georgian traditions that are ridiculous for the Europeans".

REPORTIORI, 3 March

LIA RUSIASHVILI, poet: "Total control of people [by ID cards] is unacceptable. If European integration means tramping our rights, then we reject European integration".

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&tid=18477>

Geworld.ge, 6 March

KETI KHOMERIKI, journalist: "Do you agree with the idea that USA is the land of sin, gays and thousand dirty things?..

VALERY KHABURDZANIA, former security minister: "This is liberalism... They don't have ethnic basis and the idea, but the state needs the idea. So, America is looking for ideas and unfortunately it has found the idea that is called hemophilia versus homophobia. This means that dirty people impose their way of life on the society. They are proud just of being "free people", members of LGBT society, and demonstrate this on the level of circus. How esthetic it is to carry around some phallus dummies and prancing of naked men – let them explain this, and why this must be demonstrated?.. As to those who have genetic and hormone problems, I understand them, but these people must put forward their moral brake, and if you are genetically and hormonally such, then you must get treatment, and if you cannot then at least don't make your private life public and don't impose this on society."

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5698>

Geworld.ge, 5 March

DAVID MKHEIDZE, journalist: "...These "humanist" Yankees have murdered all the Indians; This is America of those racists who were killing millions of uncle Toms by slave labor, while the descendants of those Toms were burnt alive by Ku Klux Klan until 1960-ies, and the survivors had to live in a humiliating racial discrimination; these are the "democrats" who defend their country's "national interests" thousands of miles away from it – they ruthlessly bombed the Orthodox(!) Serbia, dissolved Yugoslavia, began Iraq War under artificial pretext, and the "revolutions" in Egypt and Lybia; then they killed or hanged the dictators they themselves had created; these are the Americans who say they fight against terrorism, but in fact help and finance the radical Islamists, if their actions are directed against Russia (for example, in Syria)."

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5689&>



ALIA: *"We must suppress our emotions when they make sexual minorities equal to us, and make other religions equal to the Orthodox religion. In many cases we will have to reject those Georgian traditions that are ridiculous for the Europeans".*

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Anti-Western Sentiments

Geworld.ge, 6 March

GIORGI GERMANIDZE, Global Tendencies Research Institute: "... This [new world order, speaks about initialing of the EU Association Agreement] is the most evil system that has ever existed in the history of mankind... When they are done with creating the new man, or a slave, all the mankind will become easier to rule; and a citizen, as an individual, will in fact disappear, and like an animal won't have either free will, or values, religion, etc. This is the so called neo-liberalism, which is a sick movement of sick people."

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5700&lang>

Discrimination on Religious Grounds

PIRVELI, 8 March

The news agency reports on the grievances of the locals in Khobi about construction of a King Hall by the Jehovah's Witnesses. The report does not include position of the Jehovah's Witnesses themselves.

Local resident: „We got interested about what they were building, and they told us that they were building a “royal palace”, where meetings would be held. We cannot accept this fact and will launch protest rallies from Monday“.

KAVKASIA, Spektri, 5 March

DAVID AKUBARDIA, anchor: "It is horrible if we don't integrate the sea region, believe me, and I am not even talking about 1400 mosques built in Georgia by the Turks. They will come here and take over those places ".

Qronika, 3 March

ELIZBAR DIAKONIDZE, Trinity Cathedral dean: „You know where the Mus-

lims must have mosques? In their villages, where they live. In Pakhralo, Marneuli, but here in Telavi? Gori? And why must they have them in Tbilisi, so that they can visit a mosque when they come for business? Show me, in which province of Turkey do they have a Georgian Orthodox church, do they have it in Tao? Or in Artvin? They have it prohibited by the constitution to preach a different faith“.

Geworld.ge, 3 March

GIORGI GERMANIDZE, Global Tendencies Research Institute: "This government is, maybe not explicitly, but in fact, continuing the policy of the former government. This can be said, for example, because of the decision they made about financing religious communities..."

I repeat: this is part of the new world order and its main goal is to destroy the united monolithic society, to confront minorities with the majority, or to put it simply, use the principle of divide and conquer. That's it, they use this principle on every level. "

<http://geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=5700>



ELIZBAR DIAKONIDZE, Trinity Cathedral dean: „You know where the Muslims must have mosques? In their villages, where they live. In Pakhralo, Marneuli, but here in Telavi? Gori? And why must they have them in Tbilisi, so that they can visit a mosque when they come for business?“

Discrimination on Sexual Grounds

ASAVAL_DASAVALI, 3-9 March

HAMLET CHIPASHVILI, political scientist: "They will make same-sex marriage legal – by our own hand, or by the hand of Usupashvili-Alasania, and we will walk around waving our asses, both women and men, our hands together, our lips and eyes painted, and will cry out loudly – we are Georgians, and therefore Europeans... Then we will marry other men in foreign countries and create "happy" families, traditional and Georgian."

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: "Mr Nodar, I would like to ask you about preparations of the LGBT society for 17 May... What must people do

to prevent a European gay pride on Rustaveli?"

NODAR MGALOBESHVILI, actor: "This is unacceptable! I don't want such Europe or America! If we lose our traditions and values, what is the sense in such existence?!.. On 17 May all of Tbilisi must go out on Rustaveli Avenue and without any mess, quietly protest against this!.. Let the whole world see that people and clergy won't allow gay parades in Georgia! This is not for us – that's it!.. And if they won't allow us to Europe because of this, then good bye to them".

GIORGI GIGAURI, journalist: "Yes, this dirtiness [Archil Sharvashidze's literary work "Whores in the Headscarf" that had won the "Saba" literature competition organized by TBC] is obviously created as and antipode of Niko Lortkipanidze's "Woman in the Headscarf", and that is why it smells of literary dirtiness!.. Well-known representative of the LGBT society and one of the servants of Saakashvili Anzhela Mazmaniani proclaims solidarity with Mamuka Khazaradze!.. Mamuka Khazari and Anzhela Mazmaniani must together stand as witnesses and with their unbeliever asses in front of the court!"

Political Speculations

ALIA, 7-10 March

GELA ZEDELASHVILI, journalist: "Alia wrote about influential foreigners recruited by the National Movement as early as in December 2013. Then it was about EU representative in Georgia Philip Dimitrov, who never misses an opportunity to teach us lessons. He always reminds us that nobody forces us to legalize gay marriages, but to get into EU we still won't avoid this and must understand that it is not a crime. After that statement one official contacted Alia and said that Dimitrov himself is a homosexual and since the Nationals made a covert video of him, they control him, and Giga Bokeria himself is making him do whatever he wants....

Pay attention, Philip Dimitrov is thinking just like Giga Bokeria: that there is a big group of people in Georgia who oppress different religions, tastes (here they mean homosexuality) and different political views. This is not only meddling in the country's internal affairs, but also open support of the Nationals".

PIRVELI, 7 March

NINO REKHVIASHVILI, journalist: „So, the Nationals actually do have the video recordings where Dimitrov's passions are well depicted."

<http://pia.ge/archive.php?lang=geo>

Gender Topics



US State Department International Women of Courage Award received by the Bishop of the Georgian Evangelic-Baptist Church Rusudan Gotsiridze was reported by internet portal *Netgazeti* (4 March) and news agency *Interpressnews* (5 March). It was not reported in the prime time TV news programs.

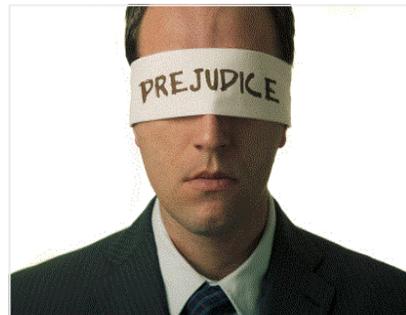
Rezonansi newspaper (5 March) reported only on the nomination for this Award of a Ukrainian singer and Maidan activist Ruslana, in the entertainment rubric, which is an expression of a stereotyped attitude by the editors, according to which a woman singer is viewed as an entertainment object, not a political activist, for being which she was nominated for the Award.

The women themes were widely covered in the context of the 8 March International Women's Day. While media outlets covered this topic mainly by reporting on official events, internet portal *Netgazeti* offered its readers deep analysis of the gender issues, and stressed defense of the women's rights.

Prejudices

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, 3-9 March

Doctor Jaba: "I cannot say it definitely, but during the rule of the Georgians-hating Nationals many things were done against the people. It is possible that artificially made flues and viruses were spread around on purpose."



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