

# საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



## Statement of GYLA Georgian Media Legal Defense Center

On May 10, 2012 the President Mikheil Saakashvili assessed activities of some media representatives in a negative context in Ilia Chavchavadze museum at the presentation of the Computer Education Dissemination Society. As he noted, “Alia” and similar newspapers and “some Nazi elements” would have “engulfed and torn off” them (Ilia Chavchavadze and Iakob Gogebashvili.) As Saakashvili stated they preach “ignorance” (citation from Ilia chavchavadze). “They belong to marginalized group and will never return and rejoin the primary part of the society” – the president added.

GYLA Media Legal Defense Center believes that only public is authorized to evaluate the product prepared by Georgian media representatives, notwithstanding its quality, save for the cases when their activity comes in conflict with Georgian legislation.

We consider impermissible supreme state official’s instructions to the journalists on the type and manner of submitting information to public, as well as any attempt to form media representatives into a marginalized group. Freedom of expression is the cornerstone of a democratic society and the right is linked to freedom of press to fulfill its obligation as well as to right of public to receive information. It should also be noted that this right relates not only to information and ideas that are shared, are harmless and are treated indifferently, but also to the information and ideas that cause indignation, resentment or humiliation of some part of the society or the state.

GYLA Georgian Media Legal Defense Center hopes that similar facts will not take place again and will not turn into resistance of journalists in terms of fulfillment of their professional activities –to submit to public comprehensive and objective information.