

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია
GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



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Georgian Young Lawyers' Association condemns dispersal of peaceful manifestation held by the movement "why?" in front of the building of public broadcaster and the violence used against the journalists present there.

In accordance with the Constitution of Georgia everyone enjoys freedom of speech and expression, which implies the right to protest. Furthermore, Article 25 of the Constitution stipulates, that everyone, except for members of the armed forces and ministry of internal affairs has the right to public assembly without arms either indoors or outdoors without prior permission.

Those participating in the manifestation on April 6 were assembled in front of the public broadcasting and were acting within the limits of the right granted upon them by the Constitution. They neither blocked the road nor the entrance and stairs of the Public Broadcaster. It is evident from the media reports that it was the patrol police that was mobilized in advance to the manifestation and occupied the entrance of the building as well as the stairs.

In accordance with the Constitution of Georgia, the authorities have a right to halt assemblies and manifestations only if they acquire an unlawful character. Since the manifestation at issue was not held in public thoroughfare, there was no need for prior notification of the authorities. Moreover, there were no unlawful appeals made at the manifestation.

As envisaged in Article 4(2) of the Law of Georgia on Police police is under an obligation to respect and protect human rights and freedoms of individuals notwithstanding their nationality, social, or property status, racial or national belonging, sex, age, education, language and religion, political or other views.

In accordance with the United Nations, Council of Europe and Georgia's Police code of ethics, police when using force has to strictly act in accordance with the principles of "absolute necessity" and "proportionality". Moreover, the police shall not use or minimize use of force when assemblies and manifestations are being held.

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Georgian Young Lawyers' Association urges the authorities to hold accountable those who abused their power and interfered with the lawful exercise of the right to assemble. Georgian Young Lawyers Association further demands to urgently respond to acts of violence carried out against the journalists.