



GYLA RESPONDS TO THE EVENTS TAKING PLACE IN IBERIA TV

On 09 September 2018, an audio recording was disseminated depicting the conversation of the founder of TV Company Iberia Zaza Okuashvili and the former Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs of Georgia Levan Kipiani. In the dialogue, the former official points out that the TV company is irritating - *"everyone says Iberia is worse than Rustavi 2; it is more annoying"* and offers the owner to exchange it in order to solve certain problems - *"what about exchanging the Television for the problems, I will support it."*

According to the audio recording of 10 September 2018, in which allegedly the above mentioned persons are talking to each other, it is obvious that the former Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs had been negotiating with the government to solve the Omega Group's problems and was intending to meet with the Prime Minister to discuss the issue. Ucha Mamatsashvili, the cousin of former Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, was also involved in the process.

We believe that such conversations, especially by the persons related to the government, are inadmissible. Whatever the product is developed by media representatives, solely the society has the right to evaluate it, except for the cases when their activities are inconsistent with the Georgian legislation.

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



The above recordings may contain the signs of offenses envisaged by the Criminal Code of Georgia. GYLA calls on the investigative authorities to timely, comprehensively and thoroughly examine the fact and react accordingly.

In addition, it is important to protect the rights of journalists in the ongoing processes. The employees are still unaware whether TV will continue its activities or not. The termination of broadcasting will give rise to even more questions during the pre-election period.