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# Russian law, with the aim of undermining freedom of expression and assembly

The Georgian authorities continue their repressive efforts to disrupt the peaceful demonstration against the Russian law, with the aim of undermining freedom of expression and assembly. Active special means are being used without any factual basis and in violation of international standards, particularly at close range. At 21:55, the Ministry of Internal Affairs began using active special means against peaceful demonstrators, likely employing pepper spray to disperse them from the vicinity behind the Parliament. As it turns out, the pepper spray was used at close range, targeting the face. The situation is significantly aggravated by the fact that, according to reports, several activists have been detained and beaten administratively.

## **We call on the Ministry of Internal Affairs to:**

- Cease the use of active special means against participants of the peaceful protest.
- Allow the peaceful participants of the rally to continue without interruption, and address any incidents or violations within the context of the individual event only if necessary. The rally should be considered peaceful as long as the majority of participants choose this form of expression.
- The Special Investigation Service should promptly launch an investigation and undertake all necessary investigative actions to identify and address any instances of excessive force by law enforcement officers.
- The public defender should visit the detainees to assess their health and legal status, and then inform the public accordingly.

Photo Radio Freedom