

Government of Georgia fact sheet on the attack of journalists Levan Sutidze, Irakli Kikadze and Nino Macharashvili

On January 12, 2016, the officers of Old Tbilisi Police Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs launched a criminal investigation into the fact of beating Irakli Kiknavelidze, Levan Sutidze, Avtandil Koridze and Nino Macharashvili at the Restaurant “Chashnagiri” on Kote Apkhazi Street #25. Investigation has been instituted under Article 125¹ of the Criminal Code of Georgia.

On January 12, 2016, at about 20:40 p.m., Shalva Gagnidze, Tornike Tutberidze and Demetre Lapanashvili were at the Restaurant “Chashnagiri” on Kote Apkhazi Street #25. They recognized the journalists of TV “Tabula”: Irakli Kiknavelidze, Levan Sutidze, Nino Macharashvili and the former journalist of the “Tabula” magazine Avtandil Koridze. The Group of above-mentioned people decided to persecute journalists due their stand towards the Georgian Church and Patriarch portrayed in various programs aired by TV “Tabula”. They approached the table and verbally and physically abused journalists on the ground of their religious views.

Thus, Shalva Gagnidze, Tornike Tutberidze and Demetre Lapanashvili violated the freedom of speech and expression of Irakli Kiknavelidze, Levan Sutidze, Avtandil Koridze and Nino Macharashvili guaranteed by the Constitution of Georgia.

On February 2, 2016, Demetre Lapanashvili, Shalva Gagnidze and Tornike Tutberidze were charged with committing a crime envisaged by Articles 27,156 (2) “a” of the Criminal Code of Georgia. (Persecution by resorting to violence or threat to violence committed by a group)

Irakli Kiknavelidze, Levan Sutidze, Avtandil Koridze and Nino Macharashvili were granted a victim status.

On February 3, 2016, by the Ruling of the Tbilisi City Court, a bail was imposed as a preventive measure on all three defendants. The pre-trial hearing is scheduled by March 10, 2016. The investigation is in progress.

¹ Beating