

## Joint Statement of Non-governmental Organizations

On July 11, 2009 the Parliament of Georgia approved with the first reading a package of amendments to the Law on Assembly and Manifestations, Law on Police, and the Administrative Offense Code of Georgia.

We see this package as a step back in the path to democracy as it:

- Prolongs administrative detention without any justification;
- Introduces particularly severe sanctions for the acts less dangerous for the public;
- In absence of appropriate regulations allows usage of non-lethal weapons jeopardizing human health and lives;
- Disproportionately limits freedom of assembly.

Adoption of the amendments under current political circumstances indicates that the Government does not make an effort to overcome internal crisis through a dialogue, cooperation or compromise, but rather stirs up the confrontation and creates risk of escalated violence.

**We call upon the Georgian Government:** not to adopt amendments with the current formulation in a speedy manner.

**We call upon the Georgian public:** to stand against the attempt to restrict civil liberties.

**We call upon the international organizations:** to actively engage in the legal assessment of legislative initiative.

**We call upon media:** to insure broad coverage of the issue for the public-at-large.

Tbilisi

July 14, 2009

Signatories:

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association

Open Society - Georgia Foundation

International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy European Integration Forum

Public Movement "Multinational Georgia"

Transparency International Georgia

National Union for Education

Union “21 Century”

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Eliso Chapidze – Journalist

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