



Democracy Research Institute (DRI)

Democracy Research Institute is a public policy think tank that aims at promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; establishment of the transparent and accountable governance system based on the rule of law and human rights; support to the establishment of free and fair society; support to the protection of human rights in conflict-affected regions; restoration of trust among parties and promotion of integration policy and support to the European integration.

June Activities

DRI: Parliamentary control over security sector is faulty.....	2
Far-Right Extremism	
DRI: Government's inaction reinforces Alt-Info's violent rhetoric.....	3
DRI: Statements by Georgian Dream leaders set a dangerous precedent for using violence for political purposes.....	3
Human Rights	
DRI: Changes relating to covert investigative activities threaten Georgia's European integration prospects.....	4
Security	
The Importance of Parliamentary Control of the Security Sector and Related Challenges.....	4
DRI in Coalition activities.....	5

DRI: Parliamentary control over security sector is faulty



On June 22, the Democracy Research Institute (DRI) held a working meeting on the Importance of Parliamentary Control of the Security Sector Related Challenges and presented an interim report about all these issues.

In a representative democracy, parliamentary oversight is one of the most important tools for controlling and balancing power. Although the new edition of the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia, at first glance, increases the mechanisms of control over the security sector, there remain a number of legislative gaps, which leave the security sector beyond supervision. This is further complicated by the high degree of secrecy of the security sector.

DRI: Government's inaction reinforces Alt-Info's violent rhetoric

On May 26, on Alt-Info TV, Zurab Makharadze, one of the leaders of the pro-Russian conservative political group Conservative Movement/Alt-Info, called on state structures, in the interests of state security, not to allow Tbilisi Pride to hold events. According to him, in case a Pride event is conducted, Alt-Info would organize people to go out, which may turn into uncontrollable processes.

According to the Democracy Research Institute, the perception of the realization of the right to equality and freedom of assembly and demonstration by the LGBTQ+ people as a state threat undermines the protection of fundamental human rights recognized by the Constitution of Georgia. On July 5, 2021, state structures allowed the pro-Russian, violent group and its accomplices to organize violence and refused to protect the rights of citizens.

DRI once again called on the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia and the State Security Service to:

- immediately launch an investigation into Zurab Makharadze's threatening statement, which contains elements of crime
- take effective preventive measures to prevent violence
- arrest of all those responsible for the July 5 violence.
- Based on the statement of the Democracy Research Institute, the Ministry of Internal Affairs summoned the leaders of "Alt-Info" for an interview. According to the information available to us, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has started an investigation under Article (239) of public incitement to violent acts.

DRI: Statements by Georgian Dream leaders set a dangerous precedent for using violence for political purposes

On June 6, 2022, Davit Berdzenishvili, one of the leaders of the Republican Party of Georgia, and Khatuna Samnidze, a member of the Georgian Parliament, were attacked by two men on Rustaveli Avenue. The Ministry of Internal Affairs launched an investigation under an article pertaining to violence in the episode of Davit Berdzenishvili (Article 126 of the Criminal Code) and under an article pertaining to threats in the episode of Khatuna Samnidze (Article 151 of the Criminal Code).

Instead of emphasizing the inadmissibility of violence, on June 7, 2022, at the plenary session of the Parliament of Georgia, the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Georgia, Archil Talakvadze, and the Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia Party, Irakli Kobakhidze, made statements inciting violence against politicians. In the opinion of Democracy Research Institute, the rhetoric of politicians which instead

of condemning violence, was aimed at portraying the opposition as the enemy, carried the threat of physical persecution of people with different opinions.

The legal interests of the victims are being defended by the Democracy Research Institute.

DRI: Changes relating to covert investigative activities threaten Georgia's European integration prospects

Before admitting the issue with third parliamentary hearing, The Democracy Research Institute is once again responded to the draft amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia, initiated by members of the party, which unjustifiably increases the terms of conducting covert investigative activities. Unfortunately the Parliament of Georgia did not take into account the criticism expressed by the civil society and covert investigative activities could be conducted.

The Democracy Research Institute called on the Parliament of Georgia, in the light of the most important foreign policy process, was not supported to the emergence of additional arguments to question the functioning of democratic institutions in Georgia and not to create a legal basis for establishing total control over society.

The Democracy Research Institute welcomes the decision of the President of Georgia to veto the bill.

The Importance of Parliamentary Control of the Security Sector and Related Challenges

The report analyzes publicly available information, legislative framework and face-to-face interviews with Members of Parliament, and reviews the models of parliamentary oversight of the security sector.

The report addresses issues related to the staffing of the trust group. There is also reviews the 2021 activity report of the State Security Service, which is extremely general and formal, failing to provide MPs with a realistic picture of the activities of the Service and the amount of information that the latter needs for parliamentary oversight.

As a positive trend, it should be noted that the dynamics of the use of the mechanism of sending questions in writing by MPs has increased compared to previous years. In addition, unlike previous years, members of the parliamentary majority have become more active from 2021. However, it is obvious that the addressees of questions often use different approaches depending on who the author of the question is: the accountable bodies do not answer or give incomplete and vague answers to questions asked mainly by the parliamentary opposition.

DRI in Coalition activities

The Democracy Research Institute actively cooperates with other civil society organizations. In June, with the support and involvement of DRI was issued several coalitionary declaration.

The first statement was about the [approach of the Georgian Dream Government toward the European integration process is unconstitutional](#) was prepared by Democracy Research Institute. In the joint report of public organizations there is underlined that the statement made by the ruling party representative and the Prime Minister about the symbolic meaning of the status of European Union candidate was irresponsible and even dangerous. We believe that similar irresponsible and dangerous statements not only extremely damage the country's European integration process and contradict the Constitution of Georgia, but also seriously endanger the European choice of the vast majority of the Georgian population.

A joint statement was prepared [on the possible involvement of the State Security Service in the events of July 5-6](#). The news story was aired by TV Pirveli on June 12. The story was described the alleged involvement of the State Security Service (SSS) employees in the planning and execution of the violent events of July 5. The mass violence on July 5, 2021, was considered to be an exceptional case of police inactivity and the demonstrative state's passivity in protecting journalists and activists. However, the information was published on June 12 prompts an even more dangerous and disturbing assumption that it may be the SSS that would stand behind the planning and management of that mass violence. The chain of events related to the July 5-6 incidents and the institutional setbacks of SSS activities call into question the resilience of the security system as a whole and creates the abusive practice of political instrumentalization of the most crucial link for national security.

DRI has joined two statements about re-Appointment of Chinchaladze as Chairman of the Court. Amid growing criticism of the judiciary, locally and internationally, the High Council of Justice appears to be trying to maintain clan rule in the judiciary, secretly from the public. By a unanimous decision, the High Council of Justice temporarily imposed the powers of the Tbilisi Court of Appeals on the informal leader of the clan Mikheil Chinchaladze. And later, he was appointed for second term of office

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