

THE STATE SECURITY SERVICE –
A **POLITICISED INSTITUTION** OPERATING
OUTSIDE EFFECTIVE DEMOCRATIC OVERSIGHT

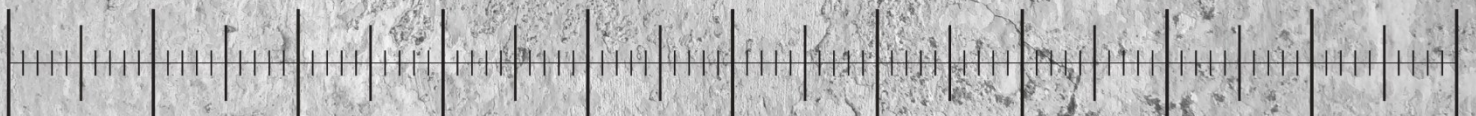


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INTRODUCTION

The State Security Service (SSS), from 2015 to the present, has evolved into an instrument advancing partisan interests. Statements issued by the agency over the years, often without resulting in tangible legal outcomes, such as those concerning alleged interference by “foreign states” or investigations into purported “coup attempts”, have been utilised as tools of political contestation and for the manipulation of public opinion. However, in 2025, the activities of the SSS became more explicit and pronounced. The agency no longer conceals its position that the principal threat to national security originates from the West. Over the course of 2025, the SSS’s activities grew increasingly aggressive, emerging as one of the indicators of the consolidation of authoritarian tendencies within the country.

From the outset, the mandate of the SSS has encompassed notably broad powers. In addition to its core function of safeguarding national security, it has been entrusted with the investigation of criminal cases that are not directly related to security matters.¹ Furthermore, the Operational-Technical Agency,² endowed with the authority to conduct covert investigative measures, was placed under its authority, thereby creating risks of human rights violations in the absence of adequate oversight. In 2025, the intelligence service was also incorporated into the structure of the SSS, further expanding the agency’s powers.³

Over the years, the politicised governance of the SSS and its concentration under single-party control (evidenced by the fact that the last three heads of the Service were members of the parliamentary majority of the Georgian Dream party) has not been effectively counterbalanced by parliamentary oversight, which has remained weak. This limited window of democratic oversight was effectively closed further following the 2024 elections, when all opposition political parties refused to recognise the

¹ Democracy Research Institute (DRI): ‘Parliamentary Oversight Mechanisms over the State Security Service and Practical Shortcomings’, 2025, available at: <https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/1597/> [ENG]

² Democracy Research Institute (DRI): ‘The Mandate of the Operational-Technical Agency in Conducting Covert Investigative Measures – Risks and Challenges’, 2020, available at: <https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/463/> [ENG]

³ Democracy Research Institute (DRI): ‘Political Influences on the State Security Service and the Deficit of Accountability’, 2025, available at: <https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/1688/> [ENG]

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legitimacy of the parliament and, with one exception, declined to exercise their parliamentary mandates.⁴ In this context, the activities of the Service have become, in practice, almost entirely closed to public scrutiny, thereby further increasing the risks of human rights violations.

1. POLITICALLY APPOINTED LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE

One of the clearest manifestations of partisan control over the activities of the SSS is the practice of selecting and appointing its leadership. Since 2015, all heads of the Service have been individuals demonstrating loyalty to the “Georgian Dream” party, with the last three heads having served as representatives of the party’s parliamentary majority in the Parliament of Georgia.

In accordance with the legislation, the appointment of the Head of the SSS requires a multi-stage procedure, which inherently entails a certain period of time. Pursuant to the Law of Georgia “On the State Security Service”,⁵ the Prime Minister of Georgia submits a candidate for the position of Head of the Service to the Government of Georgia for consideration, and, following deliberation within one week, the Government is required to forward the candidate to Parliament for further consideration. The Parliament of Georgia then deliberates on the candidate within a two-week period and, by a majority of its full composition, elects the Head of the State Security Service for a term of six years.

The year 2025 was particularly notable in terms of changes in the leadership of the SSS. For the first time in its history, the head of the agency was replaced three times within a single calendar year. The Service began 2025 under the leadership of Grigol Liluashvili. As subsequent developments suggest, Liluashvili appears to have resigned from his position due to a disagreement with the current leadership of the “Georgian Dream” party; he reportedly declined an offer by Irakli Kobakhidze to assume the position of Minister of Regional Development and was subsequently replaced by Anri Okhanashvili.⁶ More specifically, notwith-

⁴ Civil.ge: ‘11 Members of Gakharia’s Party Take MP Seats in Disputed Parliament’, available at: <https://civil.ge/archives/708589> [ENG]

⁵ Legislative Herald of Georgia (Matsne): ‘Law of Georgia on the State Security Service of Georgia’, available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2905260?publication=23> [ENG]

⁶ Resonance Daily: ‘Unexpected Change of Decision – Why Liluashvili Was Not Appointed to the Announced Position’, available at: https://www.resonancedaily.com/index.php?id_rub=2&id_artc=225116 [GEO]

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standing the procedures outlined above, the public was informed of Liluashvili’s resignation only on 2 April, and as early as 4 April, the Parliament of Georgia unanimously approved Anri Okhanashvili as Head of the State Security Service, with 79 votes.

Anri Okhanashvili’s tenure proved to be the shortest in the history of the SSS, lasting five months. During this period, one of the most high-profile cases associated with the agency’s activities was the detention of Giorgi Bachiashvili outside the country and his subsequent transfer to Georgia. Following his placement in custody, information was disseminated regarding an alleged physical assault and beating against him. Approximately one month after this information became public, Anri Okhanashvili resigned from his position upon submitting his resignation. In connection with the case concerning the alleged staging of violence against Bachiashvili in prison, the SSS detained Giorgi Kemoklidze, former Deputy Head of the Penitentiary Department of the Special Penitentiary Service.⁷

On 3 September 2025, the Parliament of Georgia elected Mamuka Mdinardze, one of the leaders of the “Georgian Dream” parliamentary team, as Head of the SSS, replacing Anri Okhanashvili. The selection of the Head of the SSS has consistently followed an identical pattern—whereby the ruling authorities nominate a single preferred candidate and subsequently appoint that individual to the position without any form of political consensus. The appointment of a politician distinguished by markedly anti-European positions and hostile, radical rhetoric towards political opponents may be interpreted as a political signal—that the agency would continue, in a more targeted and overt manner, both the discrediting of political parties and the persecution of individuals critical of “Georgian Dream”.

Indeed, on 6 November 2025, as a result of a joint investigation conducted by the Prosecutor’s Office, the SSS, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, criminal proceedings were initiated against a number of politicians—Giorgi Vashadze, Nika Gvaramia, Nikanor Melia, Mikheil Saakashvili, Zurab Girchi Japaridze, Elene Khoshtaria, Mamuka Khazaradze, and Badri Japaridze—

⁷ Interpressnews: ‘According to the SSS, Giorgi Kemoklidze, in prior agreement with Giorgi Bachiashvili, placed two specially selected inmates in his cell, who, according to the scenario, were to stage a simulated physical assault against Bachiashvili’, available at: <http://bit.ly/4uOePs9> [GEO]

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on charges relating to crimes against the state, including sabotage, assistance to a foreign state in hostile activities, financing activities directed against the constitutional order and national security of Georgia, and public calls for the violent alteration of the constitutional order and the overthrow of the state authorities.⁸

On 18 March 2026, former Ombudsperson Ucha Nanuashvili was questioned before a judge.⁹ On 17 March, the State Security Service summoned him to the agency for questioning as a witness. As explained, Ucha Nanuashvili was questioned within the framework of a case initiated under Article 319 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, which concerns assisting a foreign state, foreign organisation, or an organisation under foreign control in hostile activities. The questioning was related to human rights defender Ucha Nanuashvili's communication with an OSCE Moscow Mechanism expert.

In a context where "Georgian Dream" continues its deliberate confrontation with the European Union, while simultaneously failing to take steps domestically to reduce political polarisation and confrontation, it is likely that the function of the SSS will remain focused on the monitoring of active citizens, the persecution of political actors, and, overall, the misuse of the agency's powers for the purpose of maintaining the authority of "Georgian Dream" political party.

2. THE EXPANDING MANDATE OF THE SSS AND THE MISUSE OF ITS POWERS

The establishment of the State Security Service was linked to a commitment made by "Georgian Dream" during the 2012 parliamentary elections, which envisaged the division of the powers of the then highly centralised Ministry of Internal Affairs and the limitation of the State Security Service's functions to operational and analytical activities (namely, the collection and analysis of intelligence). However, the agency

⁸ Prosecutor's Office of Georgia: 'Statement of the Prosecutor's Office of Georgia', available at: <https://bit.ly/3NElseM> [ENG]

⁹ Interpressnews, "Ucha Nanuashvili will be questioned in court in the presence of a magistrate judge," available at: <https://bit.ly/4szYDZP>

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was simultaneously vested with investigative powers from the outset. As a result, over the years, the SSS has conducted investigations into a range of minor offences,¹⁰ including petty corruption-related crimes.

In practice,¹¹ there are documented cases where the SSS has initiated investigations under provisions such as preparation for intentional homicide (Articles 18 and 108 of the Criminal Code of Georgia); incitement to suicide (Article 115); less serious or serious bodily injury caused by negligence (Article 124); and fraud (Article 180). The organisation requested information from the SSS regarding investigative statistics; however, the agency did not provide the requested data, citing that it does not maintain such statistics.¹² This is despite the fact that, under previous leadership, similar public information had been provided to the organisation on multiple occasions.

Criminal offences which, by their nature, do not fall within the investigative remit of the SSS may, irrespective of investigative jurisdiction, be reassigned by the Prosecutor General of Georgia or an authorised person to another investigative body.¹³ In practice, however, the above-mentioned offences fall under the investigative jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs by order of the Prosecutor General of Georgia, and in certain cases could be investigated by the Special Investigation Service until its abolition in July 2025.¹⁴

Until 2025, the investigation of corruption-related offences falling within the mandate of the SSS was limited to minor corruption cases. In 2025, the agency continued to disseminate information regarding investigations in this area. The SSS reported the detention of multiple individuals across

¹⁰ Democracy Research Institute (DRI): ‘Anti-Corruption Agency – Legal Framework and Gaps in Practice’, 2022, available at: <https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/933> / [ENG]

¹¹ Democracy Research Institute (DRI): ‘The State Security Service Inefficiently Utilises Budgetary and Human Resources’, available at: <https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/1484/> [ENG]

¹² Letter of the Deputy Head of the State Security Service, dated 19 June 2025, No. SSG 92500138175

¹³ Legislative Herald of Georgia (Matsne): ‘Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia’, Article 33(6)(a), available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/document/view/90034?publication=170> [ENG]

¹⁴ In 2018, the Special Investigation Service was established as an independent state body. The purpose of the Special Investigation Service was to conduct impartial and effective investigations into alleged crimes committed by representatives of law enforcement bodies, public officials, or persons equated with them. As of 1 July 2025, the Special Investigation Service was abolished and placed under the authority of the Prosecutor General’s Office of Georgia. The amendments to the law are available at Legislative Herald of Georgia (Matsne): Organic Law of Georgia ‘On the Prosecutor’s Office’, Article 84¹

available at: <https://matsne.gov.ge/en/document/view/2905260?publication=23> [GEO]

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various municipalities on charges including bribery,¹⁵ fraud,¹⁶ preparation of falsified documents,¹⁷ commercial bribery,¹⁸ and other similar allegations. Through a series of high-frequency briefings and the reported increase in the number of individuals detained for corruption-related offences, the agency appears to be seeking to promote the narrative that: “The current resources of the State Security Service are fundamentally different. As a result of internal reforms, кадрово changes, and improvements in material and technical resources implemented in recent months, the capabilities of the agency have been qualitatively strengthened.”¹⁹

At the end of 2025, the SSS issued a separate warning statement asserting that it possesses both the will and the capacity to act against corruption-related offences, and calling on all individuals, as a preventive measure, to refrain from engaging in such conduct.²⁰ However, it is noteworthy that, prior to 2025, the SSS had never investigated high-level corruption cases.

¹⁵ Interpressnews: ‘The State Security Service detained the deputy state representative in the Dusheti, Tianeti, Mtskheta, and Kazbegi municipalities’, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/en/article/142145-the-state-security-service-detained-the-deputy-state-representative-in-the-dusheti-tianeti-mtskheta-and-kazbegi-municipalities/> [ENG]

¹⁶ Interpressnews: ‘The SSS Detained Four Individuals in Connection with Corruption and Other Offences Identified in Four Separate Criminal Cases – A Total of 11 Individuals Were Charged’, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/en/article/144856-state-security-service-detains-4-individuals-in-4-separate-criminal-cases-involving-corruption-and-other-crimes-11-people-held-criminally-liable-in-total/> [ENG]

¹⁷ Interpressnews: ‘The State Security Service has arrested 5 individuals in connection with corruption offenses uncovered in 6 different cases, including the acting director of Marneuli Public School No. 4 and an employee of the Shuakhevi City Hall’, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/en/article/144433-the-state-security-service-has-arrested-5-individuals-in-connection-with-corruption-offenses-uncovered-in-6-different-cases-including-the-acting-director-of-marneuli-public-school-no-4-and-an-employee-of-the-shuakhevi-city-hall/> [ENG]

¹⁸ Interpressnews: ‘The Anti-Corruption Agency of the SSS Detained Three Individuals in Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Batumi in Connection with the Preparation of Falsified Medical Certificates and Assistance in Commercial Bribery’, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/ka/article/852071-sus-is-antikorupciulma-saagentom-tbilisshi-kutaissa-da-batumshi-qalbi-samedicino-mocmobis-damzadebisa-da-komerciul-mosqidvashi-daxmarebis-paktebze-sami-piri-daakava> [GEO]

¹⁹ State Security Service of Georgia: ‘As a Result of Several Operations Conducted by the SSS Across Various Regions of Georgia over the Past 36 Hours, 29 Individuals Have Been Detained and Charged in 13 Separate Criminal Cases’, available at: <https://bit.ly/4uUeu7q> [GEO]

²⁰ Interpressnews: State Security Service: We issue a strict warning to everyone: we have both the will and the means to pursue every corrupt deal to the very end; appropriate conclusions must be drawn from the steps we have taken and will take, and criminal activity must cease, available at: <https://www.interpressnews.ge/en/article/144857-state-security-service-we-issue-a-strict-warning-to-everyone-we-have-both-the-will-and-the-means-to-pursue-every-corrupt-deal-to-the-very-end-appropriate-conclusions-must-be-drawn-from-the-steps-we-have-taken-and-will-take-and-criminal-activity-must-cease/> [ENG]

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In this regard, 2025 marked a departure from previous practice. As a result of investigations conducted by the SSS, charges were brought against former Deputy Minister of Economy Giorgi Mikautadze,²¹ former Minister of Defence Juansher Burchuladze,²² former Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili,²³ and the former Head of the SSS, Grigol Liluashvili himself.²⁴ While it is, of course, a positive development that information concerning the alleged involvement of former high-ranking officials in criminal activities has become known to the public, it should be noted that similar information had been made public for years through journalistic investigations; however, at that time, the “Georgian Dream” government, including the SSS, did not demonstrate the initiative to address or prevent the alleged corrupt practices of these individuals.

In the case concerning the arrest of a former Deputy Minister of Defence and other high-ranking officials, the charges relate to the artificial inflation of prices in the procurement of medical equipment by members of an organised group, through the conclusion of fictitious transactions and the use of falsified tax documentation, including the repeated resale of medical equipment. According to the investigation, through this scheme, the accused caused damage to the state amounting to at least 1,333,728 GEL.²⁵

The former Deputy Minister of Economy, Romeo Mikautadze, has been charged with abuse of official authority and the legalisation of illicit income. According to the prosecution, in order to conceal the origin of funds of unclear provenance, the accused, together with other individuals, prepared a falsified official document, a sale and purchase agreement, under which a person fictitiously identified as the buyer, namely the pensioner mother of the accused’s friend, was purportedly to pay EUR

²¹ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL): ‘Romeo Mikautadze Charged with Abuse of Official Authority and the Legalisation of Illicit Income’,

available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/33450843.html> [GEO]

²² Civil.ge: ‘Former Defense Minister Burchuladze Arrested on Abuse of Office, Money Laundering Charges’, available at: <https://civil.ge/archives/700389> [ENG]

²³ Publika: ‘What the Prosecutor’s Office Accuses Irakli Garibashvili Of’, available at: <https://publika.ge/ras-edaveba-prokuratura-irakli-gharibshvils/> [GEO]

²⁴ Publika: ‘The Prosecutor’s Office Charged Grigol Liluashvili’, available at: <https://publika.ge/prokuraturam-grigol-liluashvils-brali-warudgina/> [GEO]

²⁵ BM.ge: ‘Former Deputy Minister of Defence and Senior Officials Detained in Connection with the Misappropriation of GEL 1.3 Million’, available at: <https://bm.ge/news/tavdatvis-ministris-yofili-moadgile-da-maghalchinosnebi-gel13-milionis-gaflangvis-saqmeze-daakaves> [GEO]

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600,000 for immovable property registered in the name of the accused's spouse. In reality, the property was not transferred by the accused's family, and the purpose of the agreement was to disguise the origin of funds intended for transfer to Spain. Notably, the money laundering scheme allegedly employed by Mikautadze, as described by the SSS, is effectively identical to the scheme attributed to Juansher Burchuladze, whereby, according to the investigation, property located in Georgia was fictitiously transferred in order to facilitate the acquisition of a house in Spain. On 16 March, Romeo Mikautadze was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.²⁶

The former Head of the SSS, Grigol Liluashvili, has been charged with accepting a particularly large bribe as part of a group acting in prior agreement, an offence punishable by 11 to 15 years' imprisonment. Liluashvili's name has also been mentioned in connection with the case involving journalist Eliso Kiladze and several other individuals,²⁷ and his charges may be further aggravated in the future by alleged involvement in the so-called "call centre" case. The former Prime Minister, Irakli Garibashvili, has already fully pleaded guilty to charges of receiving unlawful income and has cooperated with the investigation. Rather than taking a series of measures to combat high-level corruption in the country, as would be expected from the head of such an agency, state authorities assert that he himself was involved in corrupt schemes.

The detention of former high-ranking officials by the Anti-Corruption Agency within the SSS—an entity that had remained largely inactive for years—within a short period of time may be interpreted more as a manifestation of internal political disputes within the ruling party than as evidence of a newly intensified phase in the fight against corruption.

It should be emphasised that none of these individuals held public office at the time charges were brought against them. Accordingly, there remains no precedent in the practice of the SSS of investigating corruption involving incumbent high-ranking officials. The initiation of investigations against

²⁶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL): 'Former Deputy Minister of Economy Romeo Mikautadze sentenced to 10 years in prison,' available at: <https://bit.ly/4lPtY8w>

²⁷ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL): 'The Head of the SSS, the Prosecutor General, a Murder Contractor, a Journalist and a Fraudster in One Scheme – The "Call Centre" Case', available at: <https://bit.ly/4c4urjK> [GEO]

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individuals who have already lost political influence cannot serve as a reliable indicator of the SSS functioning as an independent body combating corruption. In light of the closed, clan-based governance system associated with “Georgian Dream”, investigations into corruption cases involving former high-ranking officials may be more accurately characterised as instances of internal political retribution rather than legal processes conducted by an independent institution.

In addition to the above, on 25 December 2025, the agency detained Bachana Akhalaia and identified him as the principal organiser of the alleged criminal actions of 4 October.²⁸ Prior to this, representatives of “Georgian Dream” party and the State Security Service had repeatedly sought to disseminate information regarding the alleged planning of a violent scenario in connection with ongoing protests in Tbilisi. On 11 September 2025, information was released regarding the prevention of the alleged importation of “hexogen” from Ukraine, followed in October by further reports concerning the seizure of additional evidence.²⁹ In this context, the SSS promoted the narrative that another plan to overthrow the government was being developed, presenting 4 October as its anticipated culmination. Prior to these developments, the agency had also detained Levan Khabeishvili, one of the leaders of the opposition party, the United National Movement.³⁰

It was precisely the State Security Service that, following the BBC report, launched an investigation into the alleged use of a chemical substance and dismissed the claim that “camite” had been used. At the same time, the agency opened an inquiry into alleged assistance to a foreign organisation in hostile activities, targeting individuals who, in its view, deliberately provided journalists with false information.³¹ All individuals featured in the BBC report were subsequently summoned for questioning.

²⁸ Civil.ge: ‘Ex-UNM Minister Bacho Akhalaia Arrested on Accusations of Leading October 4 Events’, available at: <https://civil.ge/archives/716054> [ENG]

²⁹ Interpressnews.ge: ‘State Security Service on “Hexogen” case: Another conspiracy apartment rented by accused Denis Zhuravlyov has been detected, where a search was conducted - computer microcircuits, documents and have been seized’, available at: <https://bit.ly/4tc99qq> [ENG]

³⁰ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL): ‘Levan Khabeishvili Detained by the State Security Services’, available at: <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/33527762.html> [GEO]

³¹ Interpressnews.ge: State Security Service – On the night of December 4-5, “chlorobenzylidene malononitrile” was used to control the crowds, and “propylene glycol” was used as a solvent, none of these substances belong to the prohibited category - and the MIA has never purchased “camite”, available at <https://bit.ly/4c5Ph2h> [ENG]

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The broad powers of the agency and the risks associated with the misuse of its mandate are particularly evident in relation to the activities of the Operational-Technical Agency. The LEPL Operational-Technical Agency of Georgia, operating under the authority of the SSS, is vested with extensive and, in practice, largely unchecked powers to conduct covert investigative measures within the country. Information regarding the potential misuse of these powers by the agency is periodically reported. The most high-profile such case occurred in 2021, when it became public that the agency had allegedly engaged in widespread and unlawful surveillance of virtually all segments of society—including journalists, human rights defenders, clergy, politicians, and public officials.³² Reports concerning alleged unlawful surveillance also emerged in 2025,³³ raising concerns that this harmful practice, ongoing for years, has not been discontinued.

A significant development in terms of the expansion of the SSS mandate occurred in 2025, with the incorporation of the Intelligence Service into the SSS under the designation of the National Intelligence Agency.³⁴ A model in which both foreign and domestic intelligence services are consolidated within a single agency operates in countries such as Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, and is predominantly associated with states where democratic oversight over state institutions is weak or effectively absent. Such consolidation and the concentration of powers within a single agency complicate democratic control and increase the risks of human rights violations.

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³² Democracy Research Institute (DRI): 'Illegal wiretapping and surveillance pose a serious threat to the development of the country', 14 September 2021, available at: <https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/722/> [ENG]

³³ Democracy Research Institute (DRI): 'Illegal surveillance/wiretapping is one of the means of strengthening authoritarianism', 15 June 2025, available at: <https://www.democracyresearch.org/eng/1650/> [ENG]

³⁴ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL): 'The Intelligence Service Is Being Incorporated into the SSS – "This Is a Catastrophe", Experts Say', available at: <https://bit.ly/4dGMAoX> [GEO]

3. LACK OF OVERSIGHT OVER THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SSS

The Law of Georgia “On the State Security Service” identifies, among the fundamental principles governing the Service’s activities, legality, the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms, non-discrimination, proportionality, and political neutrality. Adherence to these principles is intended to set limits on the discretion of the Service and to ensure that its activities are conducted within a lawful framework that is safe for society.

One of the core functions of oversight mechanisms is to assess the extent to which the activities of the SSS comply with the principles established by law. The legislation assigns oversight functions over the SSS to multiple institutions. As the Service operates under the direct authority of the Government, it is, by default, accountable to it, and the principles of institutional subordination and accountability apply in this regard. The Constitution of Georgia and the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia establish the framework for parliamentary oversight of the SSS. Among the available parliamentary oversight mechanisms are parliamentary questions, the Trust Group format, (investigative) commissions, interpellation, summoning the Head of the Service to plenary sessions, summoning to committee hearings, and the review of the Service’s annual report. At the same time, the legislation grants Parliament and its individual members a range of powers to exercise oversight; however, the effective use of these instruments depends on political will and the level of interest demonstrated by Members of Parliament in overseeing the activities of the Service.

Following the formation of a single-party parliament after the 2024 elections, parliamentary oversight has effectively been nullified. The already limited number of parliamentary questions submitted by Members of Parliament has become entirely unused in the current parliamentary term. In practice, aside from written questions, virtually no oversight mechanisms have been employed in relation to the agency—**since its establishment, the Head of the SSS has not been summoned under the interpellation procedure to either committee hearings or plenary sessions, no temporary investigative commission has been established in**

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relation to the activities of the SSS, and the review of annual reports has largely taken place behind closed doors. In many instances, the use of these mechanisms has been obstructed by “Georgian Dream” party members. For example, according to opposition members of the tenth convocation of Parliament, following the outbreak of the Russia–Ukraine war, it was impossible to summon the Head of the SSS, Grigol Liluashvili, to a session of the Defence and Security Committee, as members of Georgian Dream did not support the initiative. The only mechanism that has been utilised by Members of Parliament in relation to the agency is the submission of written questions. Over the years, the number of written questions showed a generally increasing trend: 2015 – 2; 2016 – 1; 2017 – 2; 2018 – 1; 2019 – 2; 2020 – 1; 2021 – 11; 2022 – 29; 2023 – 17. In 2024, 3 written questions were sent.

The personnel policy of Georgian Dream, together with its day-to-day actions, once again confirms that the party intends to continue using state institutions, including the State Security Service, as instruments for political polarisation, for targeting political opponents, and for consolidating single-party, authoritarian governance. In this context, the ongoing acute political crisis, coupled with the dismantling of democratic oversight mechanisms over the executive branch, is likely to further deepen and facilitate the erosion of human rights protections in the country.

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