

URGENT ACTION

JUSTICE FOR JOURNALIST MZIA AMAGHLOBELI

Prominent Georgian journalist, Mzia Amaghlobeli, joined the peaceful protests in Batumi on January 11, 2025, and was arrested twice. She is now in detention and standing trial for slapping Batumi Police Chief Irakli Dgebuadze. There is publicly available video footage of numerous violations of human rights of protesters by police on the day, including one in which Irakli Dgebuadze makes explicit and sexualized threats against Mzia Amaghlobeli. Several former detainees have accused him of violence inside the police station, yet he remains in command of Batumi police, while Mzia Amaghlobeli faces a lengthy prison sentence.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 38.25**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Koka Katsitadze
Head of the Special Investigation Service
№09 M. Asatiani St. Tbilisi, Georgia

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Embassy of Georgia in the United States
Chargé d’Affaires Khatuna Kveselava
1824 R Street, NW,
Washington DC 20009
Email: embgeo.usa@mfa.gov.ge

Dear Mr. Katsitadze,

I am writing to demand justice for the jailed journalist, **Mzia Amaghlobeli**, who is standing trial for allegedly using violence against the Chief of Batumi Police, Irakli Dgebuadze, and faces prison if found guilty.

I am concerned that Mzia Amaghlobeli has been denied an adequate medical examination and treatment for the injuries she alleged the police inflicted during her arrest.

I call on you to ensure that Irakli Dgebuadze and all police officers involved in arbitrary arrests and alleged ill treatment of peaceful protestors are immediately suspended in their duties until all allegations against them are effectively investigated, and necessary disciplinary, administrative, or criminal proceedings enacted as appropriate. I demand full respect for Mzia Amaghlobeli’s and all Georgian protesters’ human rights, including the right to a fair trial, to freedom of expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly.

Sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mzia Amaghlobeli, a prominent Georgian journalist and co-founder of media outlets, Batumelebi and Netgazeti, was arrested twice on January 11, 2025 during peaceful protests in the city of Batumi in southwestern Georgia. Her first arrest was arbitrary and related to her attempting to post a sticker on a building calling for a nationwide protest. Numerous other peaceful protesters were also arbitrarily arrested alongside Mzia Amaghlobeli. After her release, she rejoined the ongoing protest, and in the midst of ongoing arbitrary arrests of peaceful protesters, her verbal altercation with Batumi Police Chief Irakli Dgebuadze led to her slapping him on the cheek. She was immediately detained. In publicly available video footage, Irakli Dgebuadze and other officers are heard threatening and swearing at her while she is being led away. Mzia Amaghlobeli later told her lawyer that Irakli Dgebuadze and other officers continued verbally abusing her in custody, and that he attempted to assault her physically but was stopped by his colleagues. For three hours, she was denied access to her lawyer, and to water and washroom facilities.

Mzia Amaghlobeli was remanded in custody on the charge of “attacking a police officer” (Article 351(1) of the Criminal Code). On January 14, in a swift hearing, the judge refused her bail. Mzia Amaghlobeli went on a hunger strike for 38 days in protest against the violation of her human rights.

The Special Investigation Service (SIS, a stand-alone agency responsible for investigating alleged crimes by law enforcement officers) was informed about the incident on January 12, and on January 15, Mzia Amaghlobeli provided a detailed report of her ill-treatment by police. There are conflicting reports as to when the SIS formally launched an investigation into the January 11-12 events in Batumi. Mzia Amaghlobeli’s defense allege the SIS failed to do so until January 17-18, when it came under pressure from a local rights watchdog, and backdated its records to January 13. At least three other protesters arrested in Batumi on January 11, Malkhaz Iremadze, Temur Katamadze, and Genri Dolidze, have reported beatings and other ill treatment by Irakli Dgebuadze and other law enforcement officers while in detention. At the time of writing, the SIS has not reported any progress in its investigation, nor recognized either Mzia Amaghlobeli or any other complainants as victims of the alleged crimes by police.

The details of Mzia Amaghlobeli’s arrest, alleged ill treatment in detention, and trial give rise to strong concerns over the likely motivation for her prosecution, and contrasted with the apparent impunity enjoyed by the police, demonstrate her and other protesters’ discriminatory treatment by the criminal justice system in Georgia. Her case also highlights broader concerns about politically motivated prosecutions, suppression of dissent, and gender-based reprisals against those exercising their right to protest in Georgia. The insults and abuse directed at her by senior police officials, particularly Irakli Dgebuadze, demonstrate a clear attempt to degrade and intimidate her as a woman. Her treatment is not an isolated incident but reflects a broader pattern in which women in Georgia who challenge authority, particularly in political and protest contexts, are targeted with additional hostility and abuse.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Georgian, English, or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: October 1, 2025

NAME AND PRONOUN: Mzia Amaghlobeli (She/her)