

Georgia: Authorities gave way for attacks on the LGBTI community and allies.

Tbilisi Pride was cancelled after homophobic and transphobic violence broke out in Tbilisi on 5 July. Georgian authorities should take urgent action to protect the LGBTI community.

Tbilisi Pride was planned for the afternoon on 5 July 2021. During morning hours, counter protesters from the Orthodox church and far-right groups gathered, and this gathering escalated into a violent mob, without there being any adequate response by the police.

The mob broke into, and rampaged, the offices of Tbilisi Pride and later also other civil society groups. They attacked activists, as well as more than 50 journalists who were reporting on the event – causing bodily harm and preventing them from doing their job.

Instead of ensuring the safety of media representatives, activists and the public, representatives from the government spoke out against the pride organizers and called upon them to cancel the march, thereby providing de facto support for the hate groups.

Prime Minister Georgia Irakli Garibashvili also claimed it was organized by “radical opposition”, headed by ex-president Sakaashvili, attempting to further stigmatize the LGBTI community.

Throughout the day there was a manhunt on people that were perceived to be LGBTI in the streets.

Eventually the organizers had to cancel Tbilisi Pride, as the safety of the participants was clearly at stake.

We remind Georgian authorities of their obligations as a party to the European Convention of Human Rights, which includes an obligation to ensure the right to life and safety for all citizens (Article 2) the right to freedom of expression (Article 10) and freedom of assembly (Article 11), as well as equal treatment and non-discrimination (article 14).

The authorities’ lack of commitment and will to protect LGBTI citizens, which was demonstrated on the 5 July was clearly interpreted by the anti-LGBTI protesters, who [celebrated their victory](#) in the streets of Tbilisi when the organizers had to cancel the march.

We have serious concerns that the way the authorities tackled the situation will be interpreted as endorsement of transphobic and homophobic violence and increase the number of hate crimes – which is already a widespread problem for LGBTI persons in Georgia.

It is urgent that the authorities take action to show that there is no impunity for such crimes in the country, and that Georgia is prepared to uphold their international human rights obligations to all citizens, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics.

We call upon Georgian authorities to

- Publicly condemn this attack on freedom of speech and assembly;
- Ensure that the violent incidents should be effectively investigated, and the perpetrators be held accountable;
- Undertake necessary measures to ensure the safety of LGBTI persons in Georgia.