



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

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Any information on corruption within Special Forces of Ministry of Internal Affairs in Georgia.

The 2010 *Freedom House* annual report on Georgia, in a section titled “Political Rights and Civil Liberties”, states:

“Corruption remains a challenge in Georgia. While notable progress has been made in recent years with respect to lower- and mid-level corruption, efforts to combat high-level corruption that began in the mid-2000s have stalled. The government's achievements have included university-level education reforms that curbed bribery in admissions and grading. However, implementation of a 2005 plan aimed at improving the transparency and effectiveness of the civil service, in part by strengthening the role of inspectors general within public agencies, remains in its nascent stages. Moreover, Georgia apparently continues to suffer from corruption at elite levels, and the administration's growing insularity has fostered opportunities for cronyism and insider deals. Georgia was ranked 66 out of 180 countries surveyed in Transparency International's 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index.” (Freedom House (3 May 2010) *Freedom in the World 2010 – Georgia*)

The 2010 *US Department of State* country report on Georgia, in a section titled “Role of the Police and Security Apparatus”

“The Ministry of Internal Affairs has primary responsibility for law enforcement. During times of internal disorder, the government may call on the Ministry of Internal Affairs or the military. The ministry controls the police, which are divided into functional departments and a separate, independently funded, police protection department that provides security and protection to both infrastructure sites and private businesses.” (US Department of State (11 March 2010) *2009 Human Rights Report: Georgia*)

This section also states:

“According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, during the year its General Inspection Service imposed disciplinary punishment, including reprimands, demotions, and dismissals, in 566 cases. The ministry also reported that during the year 29 police officers were arrested for committing various crimes, including taking bribes (seven), drugs (five) ‘swindling’ (eight), illegally carrying firearms (five) and abuse of power (four). The General Inspection Service issued two reprimands, five ‘severe’ reprimands, and discharged six officers for physical and verbal assaults.” (ibid)

This section of the report refers to alleged misconduct by officials from the Ministry of Internal Affairs as follows:

"In 2007 officials from the Ministry of Internal Affairs reportedly arrested Lasha Khorguiani, Gocha Mildiani, and Khvicha Mildiani, planted drugs on them, unlawfully detained them, and tortured Khorguiani. The arrests were allegedly made at the behest of Irakli Kodua, the head of the ministry's Special Operatives Department. Gocha and Khvicha Mildiani were released later that month. Khorguiani was released after two months of detention and a 5,000 lari (2,960 dollar) fine. No charges were brought against ministry officials, and there were no new developments as of year's end." (ibid)

In a section titled "Freedom of Speech and Press" this report states:

"On November 30, Mzia Amaglobeli, the publisher of the Batumi newspaper Gazeti Batumelebi issued a statement calling on the international community for protection from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The publisher reported that on November 25, the local unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Batumi tried to blackmail the head of the newspaper's investigative reporting team into cooperating with it. Amaglobeli stated that, despite previous threats, the newspaper had never previously been under as much psychological pressure and that the publishers were not confident that the case would be investigated lawfully. On December 1, the Ministry of Internal Affairs stated that its internal investigations unit was probing into the incident. The investigation continued at year's end. In July 2008 the Batumelebi newspaper received an e-mail message threatening to kill the editor in chief, Eter Turadze, and a staffer. Gazeti Batumelebi went public with the story and informed the prosecutor's and ombudsman's Offices of the threat. Gazeti Batumelebi subsequently received a second threatening e-mail. The Ajara Prosecutor's Office started an investigation shortly after the incident. At year's end an investigation by the Technical Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs continued." (ibid)

A report published by the *U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre* states:

"The significant reduction of street-level police corruption has been hailed as one of the success stories of postrevolutionary Georgia. However, a closer look reveals that the broader reform of Georgia's Ministry of Internal Affairs has a number of shortcomings. While police no longer harass people for bribes, human rights abuses persist and weak accountability of police structures remains a significant problem. In the absence of external controls, a real break with Soviet-style institutional structures has yet to take place. Law enforcement in Georgia is still perceived to safeguard government authority before civilians in need of protection." (U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre (February 2010) *Police reform in Georgia Cracks in an anti-corruption success story*)

A *Prime-News (Georgia)* report states:

"Employees of the General Inspection at the Interior Ministry of Georgia have David Kekua, Deputy Head of General Inspection, Prime-News was told at the General Prosecutor's office, that David Kekua is suspected in abuse of power, forgery of certificates and issuing of forged information of expertise. According to the legislature, his crimes envisage imprisonment for 15 years. According to the preliminary information, the matter concerns the criminal on the fact of murder of Nika Lominadze, Financial manager of AES-TELASI. Regarding this case, David Mchedlidze, employee of the Security Police of Didube-Chughureti district, was detained on September 27, 2002. David Kekua forged evidences on the case of murder of Nika Lominadze and falsified

results of expertise.” (Prime-News (Georgia) (2 May 2007) *Deputy Head Of General Inspection Detained*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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