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

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Dear Mr. Katsitadze,

**I am writing to demand justice for the jailed journalist Mzia Amaghlobeli, and for police officers to be brought to account for the use of unlawful force and other violations against peaceful protesters in Batumi on 11-12 January 2025, specifically the Chief of Batumi Police Irakli Dgebuadze, and also in connection with allegations of torture or other ill-treatment against detainees by police.**

As you will be well aware, Mzia Amaghlobeli is standing trial for allegedly using violence against Irakli Dgebuadze, and faces prison if found guilty. There is video footage in which she is seen slapping him on the face, against the background of abusive actions by the police force in the streets of Batumi against peaceful protesters, and following Mzia Amaghlobeli’s earlier, manifestly arbitrary arrest. There is also footage of Irakli Dgebuadze swearing and insulting the journalist, and numerous allegations of him using or attempting to use violence against detained peaceful protesters, including Mzia Amaghlobeli, inside the police station.

I am concerned that Mzia Amaghlobeli was remanded in custody following a swift hearing in which the judge quickly accepted the prosecution’s claims that she could abscond, reoffend and influence the investigation if granted bail. She was refused adequate medical examination and treatment for the injuries she alleged the police inflicted during her arrest. During her trial, which soon followed, the judge refused to admit any of her defence’s submissions, around 50 in total. Only three of the defence’s witnesses were questioned, and the court refused to summon for cross-examination any of the police officers whose testimonies against Mzia Amaghlobeli it admitted. The court of appeal did the same, but agreed to admit the widely circulated, publicly available videos featuring her during the protest on 11 January 2025.

By contrast, neither police commander Irakli Dgebuadze nor any other police officers have been sus-pended in their duties despite the video evidence and other credible allegations of very serious crimes against them. The investigation nominally opened by the Special Investigation Service into these allegations has not identified any suspects, nor formally recognized any of the complainants as victims, nor publicly reported any progress in all this time. This not only delays or denies accountability for the police’s alleged abuses, but is also in stark contrast to the prosecution of Mzia Amaghlobeli, which ap-pears to be being conducted in a manner that is politically motivated and intended to punish her for op-position to police abuses and to send a signal to other protesters.

**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, including but not only those from 11-12 January 2025, are promptly, impartially and effectively investigated, and necessary disciplinary, administrative or criminal proceedings enacted as appropriate, in compliance with their fair trial rights.**

**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,

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**Copie**

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