



European
Federation of
Journalists

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
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Newsroom of the Georgian Public Broadcaster
68 Kostava St. 0171 Tbilisi, Georgia

Brussels, 19 February 2025

For the attention of the journalists, cameramen, editors and producers of the Georgian Public Broadcaster GPB

Dear colleagues,

I have received your letter dated 18 February 2025 via Dea Gvelesiani, Head of Communication Group

You obviously misunderstood our press release of 4 February. The EFJ has asked the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) to intervene **in order to guarantee the independence of GPB journalists and to counter any political interference in your work**. I really hope you do not disagree with that!

My call for EBU to intervene should be interpreted as a call to protect GPB journalists from any political interference. There is no blackmail against EBU! The EFJ has no power to exclude any member of EBU. On the other hand, if public broadcasters officials do not respect the principles of the EBU, they exclude themselves from the organisation.

Coming back to Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani's case, we believe that his suspension is politically motivated and as I wrote it to the GPB board on 12 February, it is totally abnormal and unacceptable that his case is subject to an investigation by the politicised board of GPB! The EFJ will continue to support Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani and any GPB journalist exposed to this kind of political pressure.

The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) confirms its version of the facts, which is the subject of an [official report to the Council of Europe](#) (co-signed by our colleagues at the International Press Institute), and strongly denies having disseminated inaccurate information.

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Journalism is a public good



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In all his interviews and public statements, journalist **Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani** did not reveal any confidential information. He did not say anything that could harm the broadcaster's reputation. On the contrary, his goal has always been to defend the broadcaster and uphold its principles. The EFJ supports all public interventions by the journalist, who acted in the public interest, and who should be protected as a whistleblower, rather than punished in retaliation.

We are very concerned to learn from the Board of Trustees that they decided to conduct research on Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani's actions "independently", without the Director General or other management included. It's not up to a politicised board, but to the managing director (or an independent committee) to investigate a member of the newsroom and the latter must be able to be assisted by its trade union representatives. The fact is the Board of Trustees includes individuals whose impartiality is highly questionable. One such member is Vasil Maghlaperidze. Another member, Giorgi Kokhraidze, directly accused the journalist and the "Guardians of the Public Broadcaster" of attempting a coup d'état! At the 4 February Board meeting, he labeled them as enemies of the broadcaster and insulted them. How can someone with such a stance be expected to conduct an objective and fair investigation?

Furthermore, another board member tasked with "independently" reviewing Vasil Ivanov-Chikovani's case is Gia Iakobashvili. His recent public interview, where he referred to prominent journalist Mzia Amaghlobeli as a "farm pig," speaks volumes about his bias. The GPB newsroom and journalists must firmly oppose this kind of political trial. If they don't, others will follow.

For the rest, the EFJ knows your difficult working conditions and we have always supported you. The EFJ is the only international organisation that offered all GPB journalists the opportunity to follow a security training course on 19 December at GPB premises.

Dear colleagues, be sure the EFJ will continue to support you and to criticize any political interference in your work, in the best interest of GPB journalists and Georgian citizens.

Kind regards,

Ricardo Gutiérrez
EFJ General Secretary

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