The NGO response to the statement made by the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

23 April 2013

We would like to respond to the Channel 9 TV prime time newscast of April 22 dealing with the ongoing discussions over the Khudoni plant construction.

Our attention was drawn to the radically incorrect statement made by Kakha Kaladze, Energy and Natural Resources Minister, addressed to the non-governmental organizations who have been criticizing the Khudoni plant construction. Mr Kaladze markedly said in the TV report that: "The future of our country cannot be sacrificed for some non-governmental organizations and the funding they receive from abroad for certain suspended projects."

Such false understanding of the role which civil society has in defining policy and decision-making raises concern, especially when it concerns high-ranking officials such as Mr. Kaladze, who is furthermore the government’s First Vice Prime Minister. Opinions of the Government and civil society (or its part) rarely match; this is a natural process characteristic of democratic governance. It should therefore be strongly condemned when the government draws on various conspiracy theories when faced with NGO criticism, and decried the criticism as unfounded accusations. It is truly regrettable if the Georgian government is going to use such rhetoric in relationship with civil society.

Linking the concerns expressed by civil society organizations with obscure financial interests sounds even more bizarre when heard from the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, which, until recently, was managed by individuals with private commercial interests in the energy sector. The general public has yet to receive a clear answer as to whether or not these interests have been acknowledged.

The Green Alternative
The Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association
Transparency International Georgia
The Center for Human Rights
Open Society – Georgia Foundation
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Office in Georgia
Svaneti Tourism Centre
The Tikanadze Svaneti Youth Center
The newspaper “South Gate”
Association for Civil Society Development in Georgia
Kutaisi Information Center
Stepantsminda
Union of Teachers ‘Education and Peace’
Article 42 of the Georgian Constitution
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The "Public Defender" Coalition

No one has commented yet.

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