

NO TO PHOBIA!

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION AND GEORGIAN DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE MONITORING

The following tendencies have been detected during the week of October 15-16:

- Islamophobic statements have become even more intensive after the incident of religious intolerance on 10 September in Kobuleti. Rights of Georgian Muslims were largely attributed to the interests of a neighboring country –Turkey;
- Alongside Islamophobic statements, Turkophobic expressions have become more frequent from politicians (Irma Inashvili - *Patriots Alliance*, Temur Shashiashvili – *Burdjanadze – United Opposition*), media (Newspaper *Kviris Qronika*) and from the representatives of *The Union of Orthodox Parents* (Avtandil Ungiadze);

- Anti-Western Sentiments have also been on the rise, whereas the respondents tried to portray United States of America as the power against the Orthodoxy (Temur Shashiashvili – *Burdjanadze – United Opposition*; Avtandil Ungiadze- *The Union of Orthodox Parents*). Some of the respondents tried to describe the West as an instigator of developments in Ukrainian (Nana Devdariana – former public defender);
- Homophonic statements were addressed to the specific individuals, followed by unjustified indication of their sexual identity and their reference by the name- “chickens” or by female names.

INCITEMENT OF HATRED

ALIA, SEPTEMBER 16

Manana Kobakhidze, Georgian Dream:

„When total strangers make grave insults, and pseudo-men, but really no-men, publish immoral and dirty posts, swear at a woman, then if a husband or a brother or a son really shoots their head off, nobody should tell us that criminal situation is worsened, people really don't have an obligation to be patient with insults and swearing, and a politician is a person too!

“Because of provocative actions, one can really shoot somebody's head off “.

#26, 15-21 SEPTEMBER



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THE CASE OF RELISIOUS INTOLERANCE IN KOBULETI

The case of religious intolerance that took place in Kobuleti and involved part of Orthodox parishioners who have attached the head of a pig on the building of Muslim boarding school, was followed by another wave of Islamophobic statements:

OBIEKTIVI, NIGHT STUDIO, SEPTEMBER 15

JONDI BAGHATURIA, *Kartuli Dasi, Burjanadze United Opposition*: “What if we desire to build an Orthodox Spiritual Seminary in Hopa in Trabzon, in Samsun or in any other Turkish city, would the Turkish government allow this?.. They are also speaking of the Azizea temple, including Medrassas and an Educational Center. This is how terrorism starts? Exactly, Terrorism is an Ideology isn’t it? Imagine the mind of a juvenile, when their ideology is in the process of shaping, and suddenly it is influenced by some fanatic ideas, they become inclined and assured in something, then they are being used as cannon fodders.”

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2411460



JONDI BAGHATURIA,

Kartuli Dasi, Burjanadze

United Opposition: “They are also speaking of the Azizea temple, including Medrasas and an Educational Center. This is how terrorism starts? Exactly, Terrorism is an Ideology isn’t it? Imagine the mind of a juvenile, when their ideology is in the process of shaping, and suddenly it is influenced by some fanatic ideas, they become inclined and assured in something, then they are being used as cannon fodders.”

ALIA, SEPTEMBER 16

ELIZBAR JAVELIDZE, *Public Assembly*: “Did they ever ask permission before building Medrassas? Did they ask for it to the Government? Did they refer to the Patriarch? No, because they build whatever they wish. If they continue to construct buildings so intrusively, all of them must be turned down...”

We are not attacking the mosques, but enough is enough. We are protecting our religion; we encounter mosques after every ten steps. It is not that they require so many mosques; this is just a tool to banish our Christianity. If you look at our TV programs, you will not find a single channel that does not circulate Turkish soap operas. What can that mean?..

It is us, who has to eliminate these (Turkish soap operas), Turks are not loosing anything. This is how territories are lost, by influencing on religion and culture.”

REZONANSI, SEPTEMBER 16

SULKHAN EVGENIDZE, *governor of Kobuleti municipality*: “But those people became annoyed by the statement of Muslims. They were promising to build a mosque, but in reality they never intended to do so...”

They are offending local Christians verbally. Muslims said that they are not aware of who is doing it, but it’s not them... I do respect every religion, but the opinion of the local population is also very important for me.”

INTERPRESNEWS, SEPTEMBER 16

NODAR CHEISHVILI, *Kobuleti resident*: “My question is – if a person studies Koran, can he have a Georgian thinking after that?.. There should not be any foreign money invested in the operation of an educational center.”

<http://bit.ly/1xVtGRp>

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THE CASE OF RELISIOUS INTOLERANCE IN KOBULETI

IMEDI, QRONIKA, SEPTEMBER 16

SAMUL KOPLATADZDE: “We are Christian state and we are trying to fortify it’s Christianity.”

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2412085

GEORGIAN PUBLIC BROADCASTER, *MOAMBE*, September 15

KOBULETI CITIZEN: “Do you know why our kings were devoted? They were devoted to the Orthodoxy...”

KOBULETI RESIDENT (Muslim): “I am a Georgian too...”

KOBULETI CITIZEN: “No you are not a Georgian! If you were a Georgian, you would not have taught the prayers ...”

TEMUR TKHILASHVILI, Kobuleti citizen: “When Christian cross and Muslim mosque are standing side by side, this is an offence of our people our motherland.”

DAVID MANJGALADZE, Kobuleti citizen: “They will try to sweep this problem under the carpet and will build the mosque anyway. Weed has to be rooted out while it is small... Georgian style of living historically never involved any Muslims. Who would ever imagine a Georgian by origin being a Khoja or Mufti?!”

KOBULETI CITIZEN: “You are practically already sitting on our heads, so to say. And you are encouraging the Turkish policy here..”

NANI MELADZE, Kobuleti Citizen: “They can build it somewhere in the open fields, wherever they wish, but not in here. This passion will never fade away. This is going to cause even more destructions. We are mothers, we have grandchildren here, and everyone is in rage.”

<http://1tv.ge/news-view/76241>

RESONANSI, SEPTEMBER 15

MERAB BLADADZE, representative of NGO: “There are already 600 medrassas in Adjara. We are addressing to whole Georgia, to the Government, to the public figures, writers and poet, please support us to control those funds that flow directly from neighboring countries. We don’t know what a real purpose of those funds is.”

KVIRIS QRONIKA, SEPTEMBER 15-21

TAMAZ BAKURIDZE, representative of NGO: “Those NGOs have become overly vocal about the issue of religious intolerance, but do they ever get curious about the rising number of so called boarding education centers? Why Turkey finance such centers? Apparently there is some Mustafa who is very much interested to support the local Muslim population in Kobuleti to receive education ...”



Protest rally in front of Muslim boarding school in Kobuleti

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THE CASE OF RELISIOUS INTOLERANCE IN KOBULETI

Turks take advantage of the poverty of many families, many of those do not have enough funds to give their kids good education, and this is what Turkey offers them. This is how we lose the generation.”

GEWORLD.GE, SEPTEMBER 18

AVTANDIL UNGIADZE- *The Union of Orthodox Parents:* “The case of Kobuleti can be easily called as a provocation. This case strangely coincided with the visit of Turkish religious leader in Georgia. During such visits those kinds of issues are even more aggravated. There are some powers behind it and they have a specific goal – their goal is to discredit the Orthodox Church and completely abolish it.”

<http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=6171>

ALIA, SEPTEMBER 17



NINO RATISHVILI, TV

HOST: “This is an expansion, let's not name it a friendship, we cannot call them as our friends, because friendship generally involves both parties.“

NEWPOST: “The locals say that opening a Muslim education center is part of their secret expansion process. In those buildings they are not just planning to open a boarding school, but it will serve as Medrassa. They are planning to breed future religious leaders there.”

OBIEKTIVI, NIGHT STUDIO, SEPTEMBER 15

NINO RATISHVILI, TV HOST: “This is an expansion, let's not name it a friendship, we cannot call them as our friends, because friendship generally involves both parties.“

http://www.myvideo.ge/?video_id=2411471

RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

GEWORLD.GE, SEPTEMBER 18

JABA JVANIA, journalist: “Human right activists usually state that Muslim population of Adjara is suffering the discrimination, but no one speaks of the discriminated Georgian Christians...”

AVTANDIL UNGIADZE- *The Union of Orthodox Parents:* “Primarily the most vivid [internal] problem that we face is a Islamization, that can be confirmed by multiplication of mosques. The second big problem is on the global scale. We practically have a splendid picture of religious expansion. It is interesting who is driving this process? It can be definitely said, that it is Turkey...“

Turkey is a religious occupant; they have clear plans concerning Adjara, Akhaltsikhe and etc.
<http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=6171>

TURKOPHOBIA

REPORTIORI,
SEPTEMBER 15

IRMA INASHVILI, Patriot's Alliance: "He [Giorgi Baramidze] got involved in embarrassing business of selling Adjara to Turks."

<http://www.reportiori.ge/?menuid=3&id=38516>

ASAVAL-DASAVALI,
SEPTEMBER 15-21

TEMUR SHASHIASHVILI, Burdjanadze - United Opposition: "Aren't you forgetting that significant part of Turkey historically used to be an integral part of Georgia. Each and every Turk knows about it very well... They have adopted a "discriminative law" according to which, nobody can stay in the country for more than 90 days, unless he/she works in the hotel, restaurant or unless they are taking care of an old person. Who has ever insulted us so badly? Eventually only that Georgian can stay in Turkey for more than 90 days, who work as slave."

GEOWORLD.GE,
SEPTEMBER 18

AVTANDIL UNGIADZE- The Union of Orthodox Parents: "Part of Adjarian Muslim population is implementing the policy of Turkey. Apart from that, there are some officials among Georgian public officials who greatly support development of this process. Republican Party as a successor of a National Party continues to implement their anti-national policy that involves deliberate destruction of everything that is Georgian..."

Speaking of Adjarian Muslim population, they come out on the streets and claim to be Georgians and our brothers, how on earth can they be Georgians, when they just serve as implementers of a Turkish expansionist policy?"

<http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=6171>

**ASAVAL-DASAVALI,
SEPTEMBER 15-21
VASIL BOSTIASHVILI,
poet:**

"Oh my, how Turks and Persians come and perverse us...!"

Hungry tribes come around us"...

KVIRIS QRONIKA,
SEPTEMBER 15-21

LEVAN JAVAKHISHVILI, Journalist: "We may consider them to be our kind neighbors, but their politicians, influential persons and media openly state that detachment of Adjara from Georgia and its unification to Turkey is just a matter of time. Turkey has been working on this matter for long time and "Natsmovement" [UNM] was supporting it greatly.

Exactly during the rule of "Natsmovement", to be more precise, during the rule of Micheil Saakashvili, 22 000 Turks were granted a Georgian citizenship. Eventually we can all see the increase of political, religious and financial influence in Adjara."



AVTANDIL UNGIADZE- The Union of Orthodox Parents:

"Speaking of Adjarian Muslim population, they come out on the streets and claim to be Georgians and our brothers, how on earth can they be Georgians, when they just serve as implementers of a Turkish expansionist policy?"

ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENTS

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, SEPTEMBER 15-21

TEMUR SHASHIASHVILI, *Burjanadze-united oposition:* “Yes he has lost it (political game, speaking of Bidzina Ivanishvili) because the 90% of the parliament is completed by the slaves of American circles!..

If Margvelashvili had not announced Georgians as idiots, he would have been assigned by Americans as our president!..

They have received an order to end the reign of Orthodoxy in Georgia!.. I may have lost a lot, when years ago I did not accept the offer of Americans, but it was for good. It would have been hell for me to be forced to curse the patriarch and the Orthodoxy! Whoever did it, sold his soul to evil they are all on high positions today!”



NANA DEVDARI-ANI, former public defender: “Today the West does not care much about the territorial integrity of Ukraine; When geopolitical ambitions are present, blood of Armenians, Azerbaijanis of Georgians, or even their territorial integrity is not important anymore”...

GEWORLD, SEPTEMBER 17

NANA DEVDARIANI, former public defender: “Today the West does not care much about the territorial integrity of Ukraine; When geopolitical ambitions are present, blood of Armenians, Azerbaijanis of Georgians, or even their territorial integrity is not important anymore... Today there is only one Red Army in the world – this is NATO who enters the territories, where they expect some natural resources... While constantly criticizing Russia, we forget that, exactly during that period the “Democratizers” emigrated from Europe managed to get rid of the local population of United States of America, they have practically terminated the local population.” <http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=6156>

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, SEPTEMBER 15-21

VLADIMER KHOMERIKI, *Foundation of Unity of Georgian and Russian people:*

“Apparently Americans warned him [Saakashvili] not to hold any kind of negotiations with Russia and don’t even think about the territorial integrity!”

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, SEPTEMBER 15-21

NANA DEVDARIANI, “Global Research Center”, former public defender: “Let’s review what are the priorities of the today’s world – same-sex marriage, legalization of child adoption for the same-sex couples!..

To fight for the equality between men and women is a different business (Georgian people knew far more about this issue than Europeans did even in early times - during the times of King Tamar). But fighting for legalization of same-sex marriage is totally different thing! The interests of Georgian political elite are the opposite of the interests of Georgian society. They obey to the West without any second thought, but Georgian Society still prefers Russia to West!”

Continued on p. 7

ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENTS

GEOWORLD, SEPTEMBER 18

AVTANDIL UNGIADZE- *The Union of Orthodox Parents:* “America pretends to be so troubled by the aggression of Islamist fundamentalists, when they kill peaceful population. It has even announced a war against them. But on the other hand, they fully support Muslim expansion in Georgia... This is an action against the national consciousness and Orthodoxy...

Let's just consider the statement of State Department of America, announcing that they are concerned about the privileged position of the Orthodox Church compared to other confessions...

The world, which is possessed by demon is troubled by the existence of Orthodoxy, they are trying to diminish it as much as possible and force it to disappear in the minds of people...

As far as I am concerned, and it is not only my position, such unmindful aspirations towards the European Union or NATO is not right. Russia will never allow that, and Georgia will always be a battlefield. It is quite suitable for America though, it is interested in the chaos that is under their control. Look what is happening in Ukraine today, this is the proof that the war is the only alternative for America.”

<http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=6171>

GEOWORLD.GE, SEPTEMBER 18

GIVI SOMKHISHVILI, writer: “We should not assume that Europeanization is an easy thing, in order to let you step in their river you have to adopt an antidiscrimination law. A gift of the devil is disguised by the mask of a holy lamb...

We have already removed the lid of the Pandora Box, same-sex marriage is getting ready to fly out of it, it will be followed by incest soon, which is the deadliest sin, even animals, beasts and wild creature do not dare to commit it...

We are being to civilized, as if we are the strategic partners of Americans, in reality we follow US-NATO cart just like a calf. On their footprints we see moaning Libya, Iraq floundering in blood, Afghanistan, Syria and now Ukraine that is messed up by them.”

<http://www.geworld.ge/View.php?ArtId=6170>

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, SEPTEMBER 15-21

HAMLET CHIPASHVILI, political scientist: “What is the result of our loud aspirations towards NATO? the answer is: 20% lost territories, hostility from a neighboring country with nuclear power; dead soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan; Georgia has become a poor country knocking on the door of NATO and Brussels does not really approve it.”

HOMOPHOBIA

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, SEPTEMBER 15-21

ELIZBAR DIA-KONIDZE, deacon: “If Mamuka Akhvlediani who is suspected to be a pederast, keeps bringing the holly fire from the Church of the holly Easter in Jerusalem, nothing will save us!...”

KVIRIS QRONIKA, SEPTEMBER 15-21

ELIZBAR JAVELIDZE, Public Assembly: “They are sticking everything dirty into our noses, such as LGBT parades for example.”

ASAVAL-DASAVALI, SEPTEMBER 15-21

DIMITRI CHUBINIDZE, Journalist: “The commander of Mikheil Saakashvili’s

“Chickens” Anjela Mazmanian [Giorgi Mazmanian] resembles Match-maker by Lukas Cranach, but Giorgi the Calf-Eater is just like Giorgi the Grants-eater – Margvelashvili!...

The calf-eater always used to ask things from others, the grant-eater is always asked and requested to do things... he may even be asked to announce Georgian nation as Konchitas, leave alone as the idiots!”

KVIRIS QRONIKA, SEPTEMBER 15-21

GIORGII JIKHIASHVILI, Journalist: “If you listen to that captain of “Chickens” [Irakli Vachradze], each and every

Orthodox person is an offender, KGB agent and the enemy of their country... The chickens like Vachradze are acting with their words (since speaking is the only thing he can do), but chickens like Saakashvili-Bokeria implements activities to cause this disorder...

This is why those bloody criminals are anxious; this is why they allow those chickens to cluck. As a matter of fact, none of them care about the Islam, Muslims and their rights!”

GENDER STEREOTYPES

PRIME TIME, SEPTEMBER 15

TAMAR GONGADZE, Journalist: “The target audience of channel “Marao” is woman, but the director of the channel does not exclude the possibility of including the men in the lines of weak sex.”