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## **Union of Human Rights Defenders – Human Rights Center Calls on the Ministry of Internal Affairs to Deploy only Uniformed and Identifiable Police Officers at the Assemblies and Manifestations**

In 2024, HRC monitors observed various protest demonstrations to assess the state of freedom of assembly-manifestation and expression in Georgia. In accordance with the monitoring reports of Human Rights Center, besides other human rights violations, the use of all police units for the facilitation of assemblies was identified as major tendency, particularly during the protest demonstrations against the Russian law, which was reintroduced in the Parliament of Georgia in Spring 2024. Like in the previous years, together with the uniformed police officers alleged law enforcement officers without uniforms were also present at the sites of protest demonstrations and it was impossible to identify them. Furthermore, the unidentified people communicated with other uniformed police officers, took photos and videos of active participants and organizers of the protest. They reported to the senior officials after what purposeful persecution-arrest and sometimes physical violence against these people started.

In accordance with the assessment of Human Rights Center, it is important that law enforcement officers, who are engaged in the facilitation of peaceful assemblies, shall be clearly and individually identifiable. It will promote increased accountability and responsibility of the police officers attending the demonstrations because they feel being under observation and if they violate the law, respective liabilities will be imposed on them. Therefore, in order to reinforce the effective responsibility of the police officers, they must be always easily identifiable for what they must wear uniforms or other identification symbols.

**Considering the abovementioned, the Union of HRDs – Human Rights Center calls on:**

### **The Ministry of Internal Affairs**

- To ensure engagement of uniformed and identifiable police officers in the facilitation process of assemblies and manifestations;
- To ensure that law enforcement officers engaged in the management/facilitation process of assemblies were properly trained and qualified.

*Union of HRDs – Human Rights Center*