

## Georgia: Ahead of verdict, press freedom groups renew call for Mzia Amaglobeli's release

Ahead of the expected verdict in the case of veteran Georgian journalist [Mzia Amaglobeli](#) on Friday August 1, the undersigned press freedom, journalists, and human rights organisations jointly renew our call on Georgian Dream authorities to dismiss the criminal charge against her and to facilitate her immediate release.

Amaglobeli has been unjustly [held](#) in pre-trial detention since her arrest in January, during which time her health and eyesight have dangerously deteriorated. She has been charged under the criminal code for attacking a police officer — a charge widely regarded as excessive and politically motivated — which carries a potential sentence of up to seven years in prison. At a hearing on July 14, Amaglobeli [testified](#) about the humiliating and dehumanizing treatment she endured during her arrest on January 11 and 12.

Since her arrest, Amaglobeli and her media organisations have faced [smear campaigns](#), [degrading treatment](#), and [economic retaliation](#). Georgian Dream authorities have also wrongly [accused](#) her of acting on behalf of [foreign powers](#) – in what appears to be an effort to undermine her credibility as a journalist. On July 17, authorities [ordered](#) the seizure of the bank accounts of Gazeti Batumelebi and Netgazeti—another step in the Georgian Dream party's campaign to pressure these outlets.

Amaglobeli has become a symbol of the resilience of Georgian media. Her arrest and prosecution comes amid a wider crackdown on media freedom in Georgia. The ruling Georgian Dream party has restricted the [space](#) for independent journalism through repressive laws, arbitrary arrests, deliberate economic pressure, and impunity for crimes against journalists.

Ahead of what is expected to be Amaglobeli's final hearing on August 1, we [reiterate](#) our call for the criminal charge against her to be dropped and for her immediate release. Our organizations, [some of which were in Georgia](#) earlier this month to monitor the previous hearing, will be closely watching developments tomorrow and hope that this discriminatory and excessive persecution of a symbol of media freedom in Georgia will come to an end.

Signed:

International Press Institute (IPI)  
European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)  
European Centre for Press and media Freedom (ECPMF)  
ARTICLE 19 Europe  
Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT)  
Free Press Unlimited (FPU)  
Justice for Journalists Foundation  
Index on Censorship  
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)  
Araminta  
Media Diversity Institute Global  
Media Development Investment Fund  
IMS (International Media Support)  
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)

*This statement is part of the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR), a Europe-wide mechanism which tracks, monitors and responds to violations of press and media freedom in EU Member States and Candidate Countries.*

## MEDIA FREEDOM RAPID RESPONSE

