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## **Georgia: Prosecutor's Office freezes bank accounts of five human rights and civil society organisations**

On 17 March 2025, the Office of Georgia's Prosecutor General issued a [statement](#), confirming that human rights organisations '**Human Rights House Tbilisi**' and '**Shame Movement**' along with three other civil society organisations – Nanuka's Fund, Prosperity Georgia and Fund for Each Other 24/7 – have had their bank accounts frozen. The Prosecutor's office accused the organisations of financially supporting and socially endorsing the participants of violent protests against the re-election of the Georgian Dream Party to the Georgian Parliament in October 2024. The human rights organisations reported that they did not receive any preliminary alert or notification from the authorities about the order to freeze their accounts, nor were they informed that their organisations were a part of a criminal investigation.

[Human Rights House Tbilisi](#) (თბილისის ადამიანის უფლებათა სახლი) is a human rights organisation from Tbilisi, Georgia. The organisation is membership-based and unites five civil society organisations working in the field of human rights. Member organisations develop joint strategies, with a focus on protecting and strengthening human rights defenders and organisations, as well as raising awareness on human rights issues. Human Rights House Tbilisi is one of the key regional actors providing support to human rights defenders and their organisations at risk. The House acts as a hub for regional activists and defenders across Georgia.

[Shame Movement](#) (სირცხვილია) is a human rights pro-democracy movement from Georgia. Founded in June 2019, the Shame Movement has grown to include 150 activists across the country. The movement's goal is to achieve systemic democratic reforms through nonviolent action and to increase youth involvement in elections and democratic processes. Their campaigning has united Georgian citizens around electoral and judicial transparency.

In its statement, the Office of Georgia's Prosecutor General announced that it has been carrying out an investigation into acts of sabotage, foreign aiding and abetting hostile activities, as well as mobilisation of funds for activities aimed against the constitutional order and the foundations of national security of Georgia, envisioned by Articles 318 (part 1, part 2(a)) 319 (part 2), and 321 (part 1) of the Criminal Code of Georgia. The statement also indicated that the investigation was launched in response to the mass arrests of protesters, who took to the streets of Tbilisi after the Georgian Dream Political Party allegedly received a majority of votes in the October 2024 Georgian Parliamentary elections. Since April 2024, the Georgian Dream party has been continuously introducing legislation aimed at restricting human rights and civil society work, including the notorious law on foreign interference and anti-LGBTI law. Following the elections, the political party leadership announced the withdrawal from the EU candidacy status, which led to protests, at times violent, that have now continued into 2025.

Within the framework of this investigation, the Prosecutor's Office claimed that many of these protesters, arrested by the Georgian police officers, received support from civil society organisations, including Human Rights House Tbilisi and Shame Movement. Initially, the Prosecutor's Office suggested, in a defamatory manner, that these organisations funded the violence during the protests. However, their statement later clarified that the targeting of human rights organisations stemmed from their support for detained protesters after their arrests. The support that the protesters received from the human rights organisations, the statement asserted, intended to provide material assistance to detained protesters and their family members, including the payment of fines, provisions of legal assistance, and other issues such as medical and

psychological support. Despite the fact that the organisations were simply carrying out their mandated human rights work, aimed at enabling support to victims of police brutality, the Office of Georgia's Prosecutor General ordered a freezing of Human Rights House Tbilisi and Shame Movement's bank accounts.

Front Line Defenders condemns the freezing of bank accounts of human rights organisation 'Human Rights House Tbilisi' and human rights movement 'Shame Movement', which has occurred as a result of both organisations carrying out their non-violent, peaceful and legitimate human rights work. Front Line Defenders also opposes the defamatory strategy of the Georgian authorities in purposefully equating the funding of violence at protests with providing legal and social support to arrested protesters. Rather than suspending the support provided by the key human rights organisations, the State must recognise the crucial role of human rights defenders and civil society representatives and create an enabling environment for their human rights work.

### **Front Line Defenders urges the authorities of Georgia to:**

1. Immediately revert the decision to freeze the bank accounts of 'Human Rights House Tbilisi' and 'Shame Movement', and ensure that the human rights organisations are able to access their funds as soon as possible in order to continue their legitimate and peaceful work;
2. Refrain from using financial means to limit and restrict the work of human rights organisations in Georgia;
3. Cease issuing defamatory statements that stigmatise and delegitimise the work of human rights organisations in Georgia; and
4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Georgia are able to carry out their human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions, in line with Georgia's international human rights obligations and commitments.

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