

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## GEORGIA: APPEAL CASES

19 December 2001<sup>1</sup>; AI Index: EUR 56/019/2001; public

Further information on Appeal Case sheet EUR 56/014/2001 (19 September 2001)

### **Alleged torture and ill-treatment of Bachuki Sharvashidze (a registered invalid), Dato Sokhadze, Zviad Tavkhelidze and Gia Portchkhidze**

Around ten police officers from Tbilisi's city police department were reportedly involved in the beating and torture of Bachuki Sharvashidze, Dato Sokhadze, Zviad Tavkhelidze and Gia Portchkhidze in police custody in October and the beginning of November 2000. The torture and ill-treatment was reportedly aimed at forcing the four men to confess to involvement in a group carrying out robberies. On 21 October, Dato Sokhadze and Zviad Tavkhelidze were detained in Tbilisi and brought to the Tbilisi city police department. Bachuki Sharvashidze and Gia Portchkhidze were detained on 30 October - Bachuki Sharvashidze in Kutaisi, from where he was transferred to the Tbilisi city police department the same day.

On the evening of 31 October while in custody, Bachuki Sharvashidze, who is a registered invalid as he is missing his right leg, was reportedly seated on a chair and beaten with fists and truncheons on his back, neck and shoulders by five or six men. The beatings were reportedly so severe that Bachuki Sharvashidze's artificial leg became detached from his body. In addition, wires were reportedly attached to his fingers and he was given electric shocks. The torture and ill-treatment is reported to have lasted from 31 October until 3 November. An independent medical examination conducted on 9 November established that he had sustained massive bruising, caused by a long, blunt, hard object, on the front and back of his torso, on his neck and on his shoulders.

Dato Sokhadze, a 38-year-old artist, is reported to have been beaten with truncheons, given electric shocks, and drugged in the Tbilisi city police department, over the course of seven days, starting on 21 October. His lawyer stated that the traces of where the electric shocks were said to have been administered were visible on his hand when visiting her client in custody on 30 October.

Photo: Dato Sokhadze; © Private

Zviad Tavkhelidze was also reportedly beaten over seven days, from 21 October. Gia Portchkhidze was reportedly beaten in police custody from 31 October until 3 November.

On being transferred to pre-trial detention facilities in Tbilisi (well after the 77 **Recommended action:** by Georgian law), all four renounced their earlier confessions. A special inspectorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is reported to have studied the allegations of torture and ill-treatment in November 2000. However, the investigation was closed within the space of two months, officially in English, Georgian, Russian or any other language. A petition against the head of Tbilisi police regarding the alleged ill-treatment has been lodged with the Tbilisi City Procuracy by the four men's lawyer.

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<sup>1</sup> Please use this Appeal Case sheet as the basis for your letter-writing until further notice.

## Whom to write

<b>President of Georgia:</b>	<b>Procurator General:</b>	<b>Minister of the Interior:</b>	<b>City Procurator:</b>
Eduard Shevardnadze	Nugzar Gabrichidze	Koba Narchemashvili	Tengiz Makharadze
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Send copies of your letters to:

- Chair of the parliamentary Committee for Human Rights in Georgia, Elene Tevdoradze:

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- Human Rights Ombudsperson in Georgia, Nana Devdariani:

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- the Ambassador of Georgia to your country (if there is one)

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**PLEASE SEND ANY REPLIES FROM THE GEORGIAN AUTHORITIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. (South Caucasus and Central Asia Research and Campaign Team; Amnesty International; 1 Easton Street; London WC1X 0DW; United Kingdom)**