



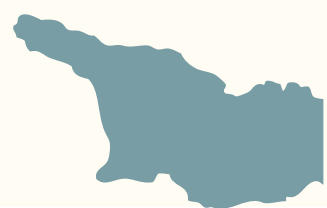
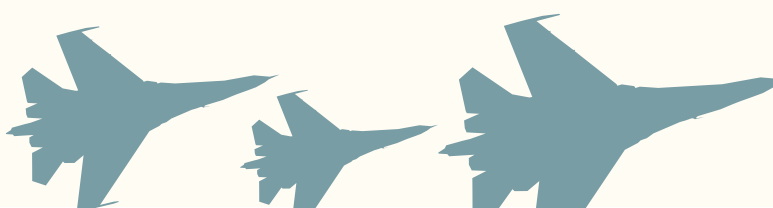
GRASS Disinfo Brief



GD and “People’s Power” simultaneously condemn violence and “LGBT propaganda”

After homophobic groups violently disrupted the planned Pride Fest event, to be held in an enclosed private space, on July 8th, GD and its affiliated “People’s Power”, made up of former GD members who remain in the parliamentary majority and separated to “speak the truth” (read: openly disseminate anti-Western propaganda), members resorted to underlining how nobody got injured and that the policemen brilliantly did their jobs, overlooking the fact that they failed to protect the LGBT community’s right to assembly and organisers were forced to cancel the event. While condemning violence, GD and “People’s Power” members simultaneously condemned “LGBT propaganda” and emphasised that the LGBT community should take the majority’s opinions into account before organising such events:

- On July 13th, the US Ambassador in Georgia, Kelly Degnan, [stated](#) that in her opinion “everyone will feel a lot safer in Tbilisi when these people [violent groups], who are on video, are arrested and prosecuted”. In [response](#), GD chairman Irakli Kobakhidze said that it is not within the Ambassador's functions to order who should be arrested, adding that thanks to the Minister of Internal Affairs (MIA), nobody was injured during the protests against the Pride Fest.
- Chairman of the Georgian Parliament, Shalva Papuashvili, also [stated](#) that the Ambassador should not instruct the MIA about who to arrest. [According](#) to him, even though the MIA was in coordination with Tbilisi Pride, because of the number of counter-demonstrators, the MIA had to put people's health first and freedom of assembly second.
- Tbilisi Mayor and one of the leaders of GD also [replied](#) to Ambassador Degnan’s remarks and stated that he and his party are against violence, and if there is concrete evidence, perpetrators should be punished. However, according to him, violence was encouraged by the anti-foreign agent’s law demonstrations on March 7-8 "when



Molotov cocktails were thrown at the police, there were attempts of burning, we saw the destruction of the city, burned cars and etc."

- Deputy Chairman of the Parliament, Giorgi Volski, [argued](#) that Georgia is vulnerable and that violence can damage the country and exacerbate foreign and domestic threats. He believes new ideas should be established through education, not violence. In a different statement, Volski commented on an animated film that was translated into Georgian and uploaded on the internet. The film briefly depicts a gay couple. According to Volski, LGBT propaganda among young children is part of a [conspiracy](#) against Georgia. He also suspected that the opposition is involved in the situation since these types of films create social division.
- GD MP Aluda Ghudushauri also [condemned](#) the animated film, stating that "Georgian society and Georgian people will not transform as some would like - to be engaged in the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah". According to him, this is a very serious matter and he urged everyone to make a clear stand about this immorality. Ghudushauri recalled the Prime Minister's address from the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), where he warned against "LGBT propaganda".
- David Kartvelishvili, a member of the "People's Power", [defended](#) the government against those who criticise the ruling party for allowing the LGBT community to organise events at all. According to Kartvelishvili, propaganda of the LGBT community is "a Luciferian ideology and a crime against humanity", but people should remember how the LGBT community's attempts to organise and hold events in the past years have declined. Kartvelishvili credited the ruling party for this progress.
- "People's Power" MP Mikheil Kavelashvili [argued](#) that the objective of the LGBT propaganda is to make people neutral towards the issue as if it protects vulnerable people, but according to him, it is an act against humanity. While acknowledging the existence of LGBT people in society, Kavelashvili said that propaganda is damaging, citing the situation in the US and France.
- Another "People's Power" MP, Guram Matcharashvili though [condemned](#) the violence, he opined that before organising a public event, the will of the majority should be taken into account. According to him, even though freedom of expression is for

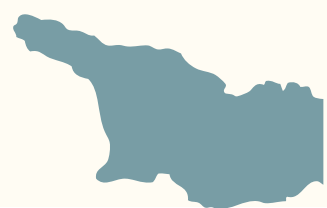
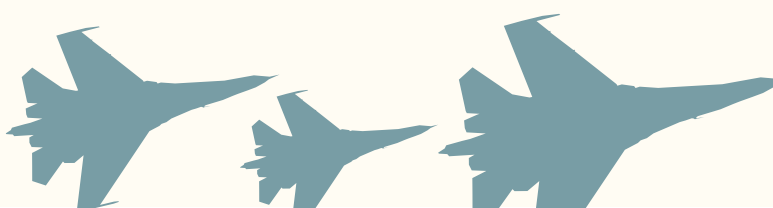


everyone, and violence should be condemned, "such propaganda is unacceptable in Georgia!".

Organised anti-LGBT propaganda floods social media

In recent weeks anti-LGBT propaganda and disinformation were exceptionally active. Days leading up to the Pride Fest saw rise in violent, homophobic and anti-Western posts on social media (as reported in the previous issue of the [GRASS Disinfo Brief](#)). This included general anti-LGBT content, calls for violence against the LGBT community, calls to mobilise and disrupt the Pride Fest and after July 8th -posts dedicated to celebrating the violent disruption of the event:

- Calls for attending an anti-LGBT demonstration were common in the days leading up to the planned Pride Fest. This demonstration ultimately disrupted the Pride Fest. A propagandist shared a post [appealing](#) to people to attend the demonstration and once and for all get rid of LGBT propaganda. Another prominent propagandist [scolded](#) those that did not plan to attend the demonstration, while a deacon [said](#) that Western sodomite liberal world is trying to invade the country. A famous propagandist went on a long tirade about how homosexuals are planning to take away and indoctrinate children and perverse the country. He aggressively called on the people to attend the anti-LGBT demonstration on July 8th and criticised people who did not plan to do so. He also appealed to the government to adopt a law that would prohibit LGBT propaganda in the country.
- After the disruption and the cancellation of the Pride Fest, propaganda sources shared posts celebrating the violence that took place on July 8th, for example, [calling](#) the LGBT community sodomite enemies and [stating](#) that they should be removed from the country. There was a myriad of slurs and curse words in these posts, painting the unfolded events as a [victory](#) against Satan and a day that will be [remembered](#) in

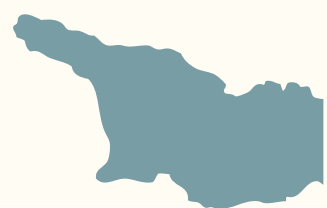
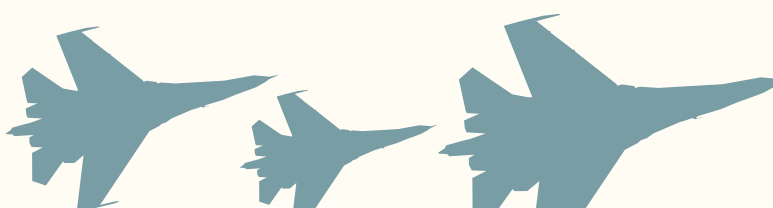


Georgian history, because propaganda of perversion was prevented. Of note, the calls to adopt a law against LGBT propaganda became more active after the July 8th events. The posts dedicated to celebrating the disruption of the Pride Fest also mentioned that [further steps](#) are needed to get rid of the LGBT community.

- Celebrative posts also included anti-Western rhetoric. Propagandists claimed that the disruption of the Pride Fest, a [victory](#) for Georgian identity, culture, conservatism and orthodoxy, was also a [victory](#) against the US and the EU. A deacon shared a post stating that on July 8th US and EU embassies were [defeated](#), also appealing to the government to adopt a law that would prohibit the LGBT community's freedom of assembly.
- One of the most well-known propagandists and leader of Alt info and Conservative Movement, Konstantine Morgoshia, [shared](#) a big post praising the people who attended the demonstration and donated money for it.
- A pro-Russian social media [profile](#) called the LGBT community and its allies vulgar and amoral, along with other slurs, blaming them for attempting to erase the concept of family and morality from society, as well as trying to teach children about perversion and propagate paedophilia, zoophilia and incest.
- [Propagandist](#) criticised and scolded well-known Georgian artists for openly supporting the LGBT community, saying that they lack wisdom, faith and love for their nation.
- Social media user posted a [quote](#) from an American orthodox archpriest, Josiah Trenham, where he allegedly warns Georgians against the "LGBT revolution" and its results. The same profile exuberantly [expressed](#) that violence is not condemnable, but necessary, because the Georgian nation does not have a bigger enemy than the LGBT community. He also posted a [photo](#) of Joseph Stalin that reads "LGBT people and their supporters should be shot".
- Another anti-Western source [argued](#) that the anti-discrimination law was adopted so that traditional nations would be weakened, adding that immorality and sin should be unlawful. She also stated that LGBT people should know their place and understand that a Pride event will not take place in Georgia.
- Another propaganda profile adamantly [stated](#) that same-sex marriage will never be allowed in Georgia



- Another propaganda source [criticised](#) the police that was protecting the Pride Fest territory, namely, he scolded the police for going against the people that are challenging the propaganda of “the most destructive sin”. According to him, the police were protecting the symbols of hellish perversion because of their wages.
- Propagandist closely affiliated with pro-Russian Alt info and other violent groups [dared](#) the allies of the LGBT community, pro-Western people and all those who condemn violent actions against the LGBT community to go to Lake Lisi on July 8th and try to protect European values. The post hinted that they would also be chased out of the Pride Fest territory.
- Several different propaganda sources, especially Alt info, [propagated](#) that even only the rhetoric about protecting children from LGBT propaganda is enough to create a problem in Georgia’s Euro-Atlantic integration. Through strong rhetoric, the West was [discredited](#) for helping spread of the “propaganda of perversion in Georgia”. Propagandists [alleged](#) that Western embassies stated how only the legislation of perversion will make Georgia a democratic country and that Georgia will only be allowed in [NATO](#) if it allows LGBT propaganda.
- Another well-known pro-Russian propagandist [asserted](#) that Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Dunja Mijatović, told the Georgian government to allow the defamation of Georgian sanctities and faith.
- Another social media user [demanded](#) that the anti-discrimination law be repealed. According to her, since the current law protects minorities, only disrupting events is pointless and repetitive.
- Another propaganda profile [shared](#) a quote from Archbishop Spiridon, who called for a law that would outlaw “LGBT propaganda”, which according to him, is essential to save Georgia from a destructive sin.
- More propaganda sources [aimed](#) to discredit the West by saying that the EU and the US are helping the LGBT community to engage children in their events. One of the well-



known propagandists, closely linked with Alt info and other violent groups, underlined the presence of foreigners on Tbilisi Pride events and argued that this proves how the West is the main lobbyist of perverting children in Georgia.

- Several sources openly called for violence against the LGBT community. A propaganda profile closely linked to violent groups appealed to all Georgians to remove the LGBT community from Georgia, because they “plan to destroy our children”. Another profile derided people who are against violence. A deacon stated that violence is unacceptable, but in the case of LGBT community, it is heroism, because Georgia has not had a worse enemy and needs to protect itself.
- Another well-known propaganda source called Europe and the US “perverted and bloodthirsty”, adding that gays were always executed in Georgia and will continue to be in the future along with their supporters.
- A propaganda profile went on a long rant against the LGBT community, publicly wishing them death.
- Another source, trying to justify violence, blamed the LGBT community for violating the majority’s rights. Interestingly, Georgian public has been exposed to such claims not only by the fringe groups, but the PM has also stated during his speech at CPAC on May 4 that just as they “will not allow violence against the representatives of the minority”, they “will not allow the violence of the minority against the majority”.