

## Summary of Work Completed as of Early September 2026

The team at the **International Circassian Center for Support and Assistance** has conducted comprehensive and multifaceted work, laying a solid foundation for future operations. An Institutional Profile and an Executive Brief – complete with an inventory of documents for the Experts' Council – were developed for presentation to diplomatic missions. Official communications and memoranda were drafted and styled to adhere strictly to the internal regulations of international bodies:

- **US Senate:** Official letters addressed to members of the US Senate were prepared.
- **UN Bodies (Geneva):** Official communications regarding the situation in the Caucasus and statements were prepared for the Special Procedures of the OHCHR and UN Treaty Bodies (CCPR, CAT, CERD), requesting the activation of early response mechanisms.
- **European Institutions:** Memoranda were prepared for the EU Delegation to Georgia, the Council of Europe Office in Tbilisi, and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Formal cooperation proposals have been sent to key ministries and agencies along critical transit corridors:

- **Georgia:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, the Embassy of Georgia in Washington, the Consulate General in New York, and the Office of the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia.
- **Armenia:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, the Embassy of Armenia in the United States, and the UNHCR Office in Yerevan.
- **Azerbaijan:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, the Embassy in Washington, and its relevant Consular Section.
- **Central Asia:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Washington, and the Consulate General of Kazakhstan in New York.

Targeted work has also been conducted within the human rights sector and with NGOs, primarily focusing on Georgia. For the **International Circassian Center for Support and Assistance**, establishing a formal partnership with Georgian government institutions and civil society is not merely an option, but a critical geopolitical and operational necessity. Georgia stands at the crossroads of all key fronts in this evolving humanitarian crisis.

Should a new wave of forced mobilization be declared, Georgia will become the most accessible and viable destination for the emergency evacuation of Caucasian youth. Cooperation with Tbilisi ensures that this border remains a managed, legal route of escape, rather than a closed trap.

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Historically, Georgia is the first UN member state to officially recognize the 19th-century events against the Circassian people as an act of genocide (Parliamentary Resolution, 2011). This historical precedent grants Tbilisi the moral authority and institutional readiness to openly address the protection of North Caucasian minorities today.

Partnership proposals were sent to leading independent monitoring organizations: the Human Rights Center (HRC), Human Rights House Tbilisi, the Social Justice Center, Transparency International Georgia, and Sapari.

Furthermore, the team at the **International Circassian Center for Support and Assistance**, in collaboration with **Ombudsman Media (Ukraine)**, has accomplished significant human rights work in two critical areas:

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#### **Nurdin Karaf.**

The situation surrounding Nurdin (Nazhmudin) Karaf represents a gross and systemic violation of human rights. This includes his forced conscription into the Russian military to fight in the war against Ukraine, his enforced disappearance, and his subsequent death in an unidentified mobilization camp due to brutal torture for refusing to deploy to the front lines. To cover up this extrajudicial killing, security forces launched an aggressive campaign of disinformation and intimidation: they unlawfully detained the deceased's parents, coercing the father under threat to record a false video statement about his son's "voluntary contract," and distributed a fake, AI-generated photo of Nurdin in military uniform online. Currently, state authorities in the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic categorically refuse to release the deceased's body to his family and are withholding medical documentation, deliberately allowing the evidence of torture to deteriorate. Under international law, this directly amounts to psychological torture of the relatives.

Despite Russia's withdrawal from the Council of Europe and its non-compliance with ECHR rulings, the United Nations' special procedures remain a vital legal avenue at the international level.

We have prepared an appeal to the **UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID)**, which can prompt the UN to submit an official inquiry to the Russian government demanding clarification of his fate and the return of his remains.

We have also filed a complaint with the **UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions**, who can initiate communication with the Russian authorities, as well as with the **UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders** to protect Nurdin Karaf's parents and local activists facing state pressure.

Furthermore, we sent a formal letter outlining Nurdin Karaf's situation to the **UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR)**, which has repeatedly ruled that the refusal to return a body to the family

constitutes a violation of the treaty article prohibiting torture due to the mental anguish inflicted upon the relatives.

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We also sent appeals to key international human rights organizations, primarily **Amnesty International** and **Human Rights Watch**, which possess well-established mechanisms for responding to reports of torture and deaths in custody. Crucially, their verification of the case opens the door to global media coverage.

Additionally, appeals were sent to the **World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)** and the **International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)**, both of which specialize in providing legal assistance to torture victims and exerting pressure on government agencies through international institutions.

Regarding domestic legal remedies within the Russian Federation, despite the biased nature of the judiciary, exhausting internal legal remedies remains a mandatory procedural requirement. This step is essential to formally document the facts, secure official denials or waivers, and subsequently refer the case to the United Nations.

In this context, we have prepared the following strategic recommendations for the victim's family:

1. File criminal complaints under the statutory charges of "Kidnapping," "Torture," and "Murder" with the Main Investigative Directorate of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation for the North Caucasus Federal District (Pyatigorsk). Since local authorities in Nalchik may obstruct the process, complaints must be submitted concurrently at both the District and Moscow levels of the Investigative Committee.

2. Submit formal complaints to the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation (and the Prosecutor's Office of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic) regarding the unlawful actions of FSB officers – specifically the intimidation of the parents and their detention at the FSB facility in Nalchik – as well as violations of the Federal Law "On Burial and Funeral Matters."

3. Systematically appeal every refusal by the Investigative Committee to initiate criminal proceedings or conduct an effective investigation in court, pursuant to Article 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Russian Federation. Each court hearing provides a legal opportunity for the defense attorney to review the case files and secure copies of key documentation (such as medical certificates, should any be attached to the file). These documents can subsequently be submitted to international bodies.

The entire dossier of documents is fully prepared and currently awaits final approval from Nurdin Karaf's family.

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### **Irakli Chikhladze.**

Over the past period, the international human rights platform **Ombudsman Media** (Ukraine), in coordination with the **International Circassian Center for Support and Assistance**, has launched a comprehensive legal and media advocacy campaign regarding the arrest of Irakli Chikhladze, editor-in-chief of the analytical portal *New Caucasus*, on charges of espionage (Article 314 of the Criminal Code of Georgia). Ahead of the court hearing scheduled for September 9, 2026, the campaign has achieved key strategic milestones.

We have taken the following steps:

- **Activation of UN mechanisms in Geneva:** Irakli Chikhladze's case was officially submitted to the UN Secretariat. Specialized consent forms for emergency response were fully executed and verified.
- **Two-tiered appeal to the National Human Rights Mechanism:**

1. An initial urgent complaint was sent to the Office of the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia regarding the violation of detention conditions (incommunicado holding) and to the Prosecutor General's Office of Georgia.

2. A second official complaint was filed on behalf of **Marianna Sherieva, President of the International Circassian Center for Support and Assistance**, demanding ongoing monitoring of the judicial proceedings.

- **Diplomatic Track:** Official legal briefs (comprising an Executive Summary and petition texts) were dispatched to the political advisers and human rights officers of the EU Delegation and the British Embassy in Tbilisi, calling for the deployment of trial observers.
- **Mobilization of international NGOs:** Full case dossiers and a factual analysis of the situation were submitted to prominent international organizations, including the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Human Rights Watch (HRW), and Amnesty International.

Significant results were achieved:

- **Official launch of UN procedures:** The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva officially accepted the documentation and initiated the Urgent Appeal

procedure under the mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

- **Emergency visit by the Georgian Ombudsman to the detention facility:** Following our filed complaint (Case No. 8802/26), representatives from the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia conducted an emergency inspection visit to Irakli Chikhladze at Penitentiary Institution No. 8 (Gldani) to evaluate his detention conditions and formally document his isolation.
- **Diplomatic oversight:** Representatives from the EU, the UK, and the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) officially expressed concern regarding the case and announced that the trial has been placed under diplomatic oversight. This effectively prevents the scheduled September 9 proceedings from taking place under a regime of total information blackout.

The campaign has successfully elevated Irakli Chikhladze's case from a local issue to the highest international and diplomatic levels. Consequently, the defense enters the trial with a robust legal position.