

Tbilisi Police Fire Teargas at Protesters

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An injured Georgian at a Tbilisi rally seeking Saakashvili's ouster Sunday. **Shakh Aivazov**

TBILISI, Georgia — A Georgian opposition party called for a "Day of Rage" on Wednesday to try to force President Mikheil Saakashvili to resign after police used teargas and rubber bullets against protesters in the capital.

Echoing language used to rally protesters in the uprisings in the Arab world, Sozar Subari, chairman of the opposition Georgian Party, said: "We are calling our supporters to come to the rally on May 25 and we call this day the 'Day of Rage,'"

He told a news conference on Sunday that the state was using its power against its own people.

An Interior Ministry spokesman said the police had intervened early Sunday when a group of 10 protesters started smashing the windows of a police car with metal poles. Protesters had camped out in Tbilisi overnight after a rally of about 10,000 people on Saturday.

"Police used teargas and rubber bullets against that aggressive group of protesters. ... There was no intention to disperse the rally," spokesman Shota Utiazhvili said.

Protesters said a group of them attacked the police car because they wanted to release an activist who had been detained. Independent Maestro television reported that one woman was taken to the hospital.

By early evening, 2,000 people had gathered near the television station's building in Tbilisi to hear about what further action was planned.

"Our doors are open to other opposition political parties. We expect that more people will join our protest and this regime will be over very soon," Nino Burjanadze, a former Saakashvili ally and parliament speaker, told the crowd.

Former Defense Minister Irakly Okruashvili — who is wanted by Georgian authorities and is in exile in Paris — promised to return to Georgia on May 25 to join his Georgian Party colleagues.

"I can promise you two things — that I will be in Georgia on May 25 and that this day will be the last one for this government," Okruashvili told Maestro television.

The rally would be on the day before Georgia marks its 20th anniversary of independence on Thursday.

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