



Georgian Dream's Surveillance of Protesters through Chinese Cameras

! *Amid ongoing protests, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia has intensified its control measures over participants of ongoing demonstrations. In recent months, the number of surveillance cameras installed outside the Parliament building has risen significantly. Georgian Dream uses Chinese video surveillance technology to identify protesters.*

On March 12 of this year, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA) released a [statement](#) asserting that, in instances of legal violations, images captured by facial recognition cameras have been used against participants in demonstrations. According to GYLA, such surveillance represents a violation of freedom of expression and an infringement on the right to privacy.

Following GYLA's statement, the Personal Data Protection Service [announced](#) on February 18, 2025, that it had initiated an inspection process. The agency stated that it would examine the legality of **“processing biometric data through the cameras of the Public Safety Command Center.”**

This declaration by the Personal Data Protection Service confirms that the cameras installed in front of the Parliament building are operated by the Public Safety Command Center 112.

Data from the Public Procurement website reveals that in January and February 2025, 112 procured Chinese surveillance cameras at a total cost of 485,877 GEL.

Specifically:

- Under an agreement signed on January 30, 2025, the Public Safety Command Center 112 procured 35 cameras of the Chinese company Zhejiang Dahua Vision Technology Co., Ltd. (Dahua) for 155,977 GEL from Ltd “GSC.”
- Under an agreement signed on February 28, 2025, 112 acquired 100 additional Dahua cameras from Ltd “GSC” for 329,900 GEL.

A previous [investigation](#) conducted by Civic IDEA revealed that between 2019 and 2024, Georgian ministries and their agencies procured Chinese surveillance cameras worth 252,390 GEL. In contrast, the procurement of cameras by 112 in the first two months of 2025 alone amounted to nearly twice this figure, signaling a concerning trend.

These statistics indicate that Georgian Dream seeks to manage the country's ongoing political crisis through “police state” methods reminiscent of Communist China.

As outlined in Civic IDEA's previous [research](#), Chinese surveillance cameras present several critical risks, including:

- Chinese technology firms, including Dahua, maintain close ties with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Despite its official status as a private company, Dahua's founders and executives actively collaborate with the CCP. In 2019, Fu Liquan, a major shareholder, publicly [endorsed](#) the CCP's slogan: "Always Follow the Party."
- Under China's 2017 National Intelligence Law, Chinese corporations, including technology firms, are legally [required](#) to cooperate with Chinese intelligence agencies. Consequently, data collected by Chinese cameras may be transferred to the PRC-connected state institutions.
- Chinese surveillance cameras [contain](#) vulnerabilities that expose systems to cyber threats.
- Authoritarian regimes have utilized Chinese surveillance technologies to conduct extensive monitoring and control operations against opposition groups and marginalized communities.

Due to these security concerns, multiple Western democracies have prohibited the use of Dahua products by state-affiliated entities. The United States, for instance, has taken decisive measures against Dahua:

- In 2019, under the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, the U.S. Commerce Department [added](#) Dahua to the Entity List.
- In 2021, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission [placed](#) Dahua on its Entity List due to national security risks.
- In 2022, the U.S. Department of Defense [classified](#) Dahua as a Chinese "military company."

Despite Dahua's prohibition in several Western democracies, the Georgian Dream has intensified its reliance on Chinese surveillance technologies. The systematic use of these tools to monitor and intimidate Georgian citizens represents yet another step in the Georgian Dream's path toward authoritarianism.