**Press Release 15/11/2019**

**Physician Kidnapping – Gross Violation of Human Rights**

**The Center Empathy responds to the abduction of Doctor Vazha Gaprindashvili, imprisoned in Tskhinvali Prison by the Russian Occupation Regime, and calls on the State Authorities to take effective measures for his liberation immediately.**

**Capture of a physician is a gross violation of the principles of International Humanitarian Law. Such action is inadmissible even during war.**

**Unfortunately, the Minister of Health of Georgia and the Parliamentary Committee on Healthcare remain silent on this fact.**

**Unfortunately, the Georgian Government has failed to take effective steps, with the involvement of the International Community, to realize the right of movement from occupied territories in case of Humanitarian Aid, and now this horrific case of the doctor abduction has added to these vandal facts.**

**The Center “Empathy” continues to urge the State Authorities to increase the involvement of the public and experts in the Geneva International Discussions Format and to ensure the security of people in the Occupation and Para-occupation Zones in the field of Humanitarian Principles Protection.**

**In case of desire, the Center “Empathy” is ready to protect the rights of the abducted physician.**

**Hot Line of the RCT/Empathy:**

**599 885468/28**