

6 March 2018

Member of the “Right Side” NGO physically attacked

On the night of 28 February 2018, a member of the "Right Side" transgender rights organisation, a transgender woman, J., was physically assaulted by an unidentified man in her apartment in Yerevan. The assailant also set her apartment on fire.

The "Right Side" was founded in 2016 by trans rights defenders, focuses on the human rights of transgender persons and works with members of the Armenian trans community. The Right Side fights for the equal rights of all, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. J. has been receiving threats due to her active involvement in the work of the “Right Side”, and her openness about her activism on social media.

On the night of 28 February 2018, a transgender woman, J., member of the “Right Side”, was physically assaulted by an unidentified man in her apartment in Yerevan. After brutally beating the defender, the assailant locked J. in her apartment and set it on fire. J. managed to escape the burning apartment and was taken to hospital where she is now recovering from severe injuries in the intensive care unit. Her face and ribs are shattered; doctors describe her condition as critical, but stable.

The identity of the suspected assailant is known to the Police of the Republic of Armenia and the suspect has signed a written agreement that he will not leave the country while an investigation is being carried out. Police in Yerevan are currently in the process of preparing a file but investigators have not yet been able to speak to the victim due to her critical condition. Law enforcement authorities have launched a criminal case under article 112 of Armenia’s criminal code – intentional infliction of serious harm to health.

Front Line Defenders condemns the brutal attack against J. and believes the attack to be directly connected to her human rights work on transgender issues.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in the Armenia to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the attack on transgender defender, J., with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of J. and provide necessary assistance with medical treatment, legal support and appropriate compensation;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all transgender rights defenders in Armenia are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.