

6 November 2018

Russia: Human rights defender's car set on fire

On 4 November 2018, the car of the defence lawyer **Lyudmila Aleksandrova** was set on fire in Krasnodar, Russia. This is not the first case of harassment of human rights lawyers in the region.

Lyudmila Aleksandrova is a human rights lawyer in Krasnodar Region, currently providing legal representation in criminal and administrative cases against law enforcement agencies. She is one of the lawyers participating in the case of human rights defender [Mikhail Benyash](#), representing the defence's only witness.

On the night of 4 November 2018, the car of the human rights defender, which was parked next to her house in Komsomolsky neighbourhood of Krasnodar city, was ignited. According to Lyudmila Aleksandrova, the damage that the incident caused her amounts to 500 000 RUB (around 6 600 EUR). Moreover, as the tank of the car was half full, the harm caused could have been more serious if not for the prompt reaction of the firefighters and the neighbours who moved other cars away.

Three days before the arson attack, Lyudmila Aleksandrova was representing a client who was the only witness from the defence side in the case of Mikhail Benyash. On 9 September 2018, Mikhail Benyash was arrested by the police in Krasnodar where he went to provide legal assistance to the participants of an unsanctioned protest against the pension reform. He was beaten up by police officers and held incommunicado for almost eight hours, before he was [sentenced](#) for administrative offences and is currently facing allegations in two criminal cases. Lyudmila Aleksandrova's client witnessed the ill-treatment of Mikhail Benyash by police officers.

Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned about the arson attack against the human rights defender Lyudmila Aleksandrova. It believes that the attack has been committed in reprisal for her work on legal representation in criminal and administrative cases against law enforcement agencies. Lyudmila Aleksandrova has previously been harassed when between 2008 and 2016 her defence lawyer's licence was withdrawn following a criminal conviction for slander in connection to her complaint to the President of Russia about raids by militia.