



Mr. Igor Batalov, Head of the Regional Office of the
Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation in
Murmansk Region
Police department №2 of the Regional Office of the
Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation in
Murmansk
Prospekt Geroev-Severomortsev, 63/24
Murmansk, 183034
Russian Federation
Tel. 8(815-2) 40-72-76
E-mail: mvd51_request@mvd.ru, mvd51@mvd.gov.ru

Stockholm 2015-04-20

Dear Mr. Batalov,

I am writing to you on behalf of Civil Rights Defenders regarding an attack against a Russian LGBT human rights organisation in Murmansk, which resulted in two individuals being injured. The organisation concerned is the Psychological Help and Judicial Aid for Victims of Discrimination and Homophobia (Maximum).

The attack took place on the 13th April 2015 when three unidentified men sprayed asphyxiating gas into the office of Maximum injuring two individuals. Despite a history of threats against Maximum, police did not react on an alert from a witness 20 minutes before the attack only arriving 40 minutes later.

This is the second time that there has been an attack against Maximum. On the 19th December 2014 a group tried to disrupt a seminar on free legal services also taking place at the centre of Maximum. Ten people were waiting outside for members of the LGBT community to exit the building and began harassing and threatening them. Despite threats, harassment and incitement to hatred, the police did not take any concrete action.

I am deeply concerned about the safety of the organisations' staff and the LGBT community in the Murmansk region and would like to draw your attention to recent recommendations in the United

We defend people's civil and political rights and empower human rights defenders - in Sweden and globally. Become a human rights defenders, you too! Read more about how you can support our work on: www.civilrightsdefenders.org

Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) that the Russian government has accepted. On April 02nd, the UNHRC recommended that Russia must take into account the “hate aspect” which motivates assailants to attack the LGBT community when authorities investigate crimes perpetrated against them. In that report two important recommendations were accepted by Russia:

140.96. Take specific measures to ensure effective investigation of acts of violence against LGBT persons and hold the perpetrators to account

140.95. Step up measures of protection against violence and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, particularly by enacting laws that prohibit such discrimination.

Hence, the provision of the Russian Criminal Code, i.e. article 213 paragraph B, that recognises that the hate motive against any “social group” as an aggravating circumstances should be implemented.

Therefore I call upon you to:

- Thoroughly and promptly investigate the attack against Maximum and all complaints of threats, harassment and attacks against the LGBT community and ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice;
- Recognise the rights of LGBT organisations to carry out their legitimate human rights work;
- Provide protection to LGBT organisations and ensure that all threats and attacks against the LGBT community are investigated as hate crimes;
- Recognise your obligations under the Russian Criminal Code, article 213 paragraph B and ensure that the UPR recommendations accepted by the Russian Federation are immediately implemented;

Yours sincerely,



Robert Hårdh
Executive Director