

Mr. Bakir Izetbegovic
Mr. Nebojsa Radmanovic
Mr. Zeljko Komsic
Members of Presidency of BiH

Stockholm 14th October 2011

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the threats against the staff and Board members of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to urge you to take immediate action to ensure the safety and well being of those threatened.

Civil Rights Defenders strongly condemns the attack on the Helsinki Committee and its staff through the website www.poskok.info. A group called HERA (Herzeg-Bosnia Republican Alternative) published a proclamation under the title "The Helsinki Committee must leave the country within a month." The organisation is accused of being "a foreign terrorist cell that supports its allies, the occupying authorities in Sarajevo". There is a list with the names of all employees in the Helsinki Committee, including members of the Steering and Supervisory board, and the address and phone numbers of the organisation. In addition, the proclamation says: "Members of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina – who do not leave the country – should be kidnapped and brought to Pločno ... where they should be subjected to strictest torture methods."

This and similar threats do not only jeopardize the safety of persons against whom they are directed, but also the basic preconditions of a free and democratic society. The lack of appropriate response of the investigative and judicial authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina has these and similar attacks as a direct consequence. Decisive and effective efforts in protecting human rights defenders, activists and journalists are not a moral but a legal obligation.

I urge you to take all necessary steps to ensure that these threats are properly investigated, prosecuted and punished. Also, I call for your clear and unambiguous condemnation of this attack. Only a firm and clear stand from the state authorities may prevent similar attacks from occurring again.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Hårdh
Executive Director

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