

THE OBSERVATORY: OPEN LETTER

Mr. Gjorge Ivanov

President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,
Villa Vodno, Aco Karamanov Str. Nn, 1000 Skopje

Mr. Nikola Gruevski

Prime Minister of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Blvd. Ilinden No.2, 1000 Skopje

Mr. Adnan Jashari

Minister of Justice of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,
Dimitrie Cupovski" no. 9, 1000 Skopje

Mr. Gordana Jankulovska

Minister of Interior of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Dimce Mircev no.9, 1000 Skopje

Geneva-Paris, November 11, 2014

Re: Concern on the situation of the LGBTI community in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Excellencies,

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), is writing to you to express concern regarding the multiple attacks and acts of harassment targeting the LGBTI community in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

On the night of October 23, 2014, a 26-year-old girl received a head injury and an 18-year-old boy received injuries in the leg during an attack against the cafe 'Damar' in the Old Bazaar in Skopje, in which the Helsinki Committee of Macedonia (HCM) was holding a celebration to mark the second anniversary of the opening of the LGBTI center. The celebration was interrupted when a large group of masked thugs started throwing bottles and crates to the people present at the cafe.

According to the information received by the Observatory from reliable sources, this situation is recurrent for the LGBTI community in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, this attack being the sixth taking place against this LGBTI center during its two years of existence. It is important to notice that because of frequent attacks the seat of the LGBT community was moved from the Old Bazaar to another location.

The Observatory expresses its deep concern about the above-mentioned events, and calls upon the authorities of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to publicly condemn the attacks against the LGBTI community and to take measures to publicly legitimize their rights and activities.



The Observatory
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of Human Rights Defenders

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Moreover, the Observatory calls for an immediate, thorough, transparent investigation into this attack, in order to identify all those responsible, bring them before an independent tribunal and, in case of conviction, apply them the sanctions provided by the law.

We sincerely hope that you will take these elements into account.

Yours sincerely,

Gerald STABEROCK
OMCT Secretary General

Karim LAHIDJI
FIDH President