

URGENT ACTION

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVISTS NO LONGER AT IMMINENT RISK

Following the attacks that marred International Women's Day in Ukraine on 8 March, Vitaliana Koval and other women's and LGBTI rights defenders in Ukraine are no longer considered to be facing an imminent threat of violence. Vitalina Koval has since received adequate protection measures during a public action she staged on 31 March, calling against the impunity of far-right groups in Ukraine.

On 31 March, Uzhgorod police successfully ensured the protection of those who attended a public action calling "For European Uzhgorod! Against impunity of the far-right", organized by women's and LGBTI rights defender, **Vitalina Koval**. The action was held in response to a series of attacks and threats by far-right groups in Uzhgorod, Ukraine, which marred International Women's Rights Day on 8 March. Many Uzhgorod march participants, including event organiser Vitalina Koval, **Ivan Danatsko** and **Ivan Dyulay**, were attacked, while others like **Aleksandr Peresolyak** were later targeted and threatened with violence. In Lviv, a city in Western Ukraine, attackers threw bricks at a tram car carrying activists who were leaving the march, but despite available video evidence of the attack no one was arrested. Later in the day, another participant in the demonstration suffered from a fractured skull after reportedly being beaten by far-right activists near his home.

In Uzhgorod, the police detained the group of attackers who doused march participants in red paint, only to release them a few hours later. Meanwhile in Kyiv, not only did the police not apprehend the attackers, who also threw paint, they took one of the event organisers to the police station, **Olena Shevchenko** to submit an administrative protocol for alleged "violation of order to conduct public demonstrations." On 15 March, Shevchenkivskiy District Court in Kyiv ruled she had committed no offence and closed the case.

Vitalina Koval told Amnesty International that she credits in large part the steps the police took to protect the 31 March action to the number of appeals the police told her they received. She went on to share her heartfelt thanks to all those who took action on the case. 'It was very heart-warming to receive support' she says. 'When you see that so many people support you, it helps you to calm down, gain confidence in oneself and it gives you strength to move on.'

While Amnesty International welcomes the steps taken by Uzhgorod police to ensure the action on 31 March was held in a safe and enabling environment, and encourages it to provide the same protection measures for future actions and events, an effective investigation into the 8 March attacks has yet to be carried out.

Amnesty International will continue to monitor the situation and calls on both Uzhgorod's Head of the National Police in Uzhgorod and the Minister of Interior to ensure a prompt, effective and impartial investigation into all attacks perpetrated against activists on and around 8 March by right-wing individuals is carried out, and that those responsible are held to account.

Thank you to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested from the UA network.

This is the first update of UA 57/18. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur50/8066/2018/en/

Name: Women's rights activists across Ukraine (including Vitalina Koval (f) and Olena Shevchenko (f)), Aleksandr Peresolyak (m) and Ivan Dyulay (m)
Gender m/f: all

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