

19 March 2019

## Armenia: Lara Aharonian receives death threats

On 8 March 2019, woman human rights defender **Lara Aharonian** received a number of online death threats following a public speech she gave on LGBTI and women's rights issues in Armenia.

[Lara Aharonian](#) is a vocal human rights defender working to promote gender equality and defend the rights of LGBTI people. She is a board member of the Human Rights House and executive director of Women's Resource Centre, Armenia, Yerevan.

On 11 March 2019, Lara Aharonian reported to the police death threats and threats to harm her and her family that she received after a speech she gave at the Armenian Parliament. For the past few months the woman human rights defender has been facing different forms of harassment online including insults and threats which she believes are being carried out by far-right ultra-nationalist groups.

On 8 March 2019, the human rights defender gave a public speech at the Civil Society and Armenian Parliament cooperation platform. Lara Aharonian discussed issues of marginalised groups, including women with disabilities, women living in poverty, single mothers and lesbian, trans and bisexual women in Armenia.

This is not the first time that Lara Aharonian has faced reprisals for her human rights work. On 20 April 2018, she was detained during a peaceful protest in Yerevan against the appointment of former president Serzh Sargsyan as prime minister. She was released two hours after her detention.

Front Line Defenders expresses its concern regarding the threats and online harassment that Lara Aharonian has been facing in connection to her peaceful and legitimate human rights work.

### Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Armenia to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the threats against Lara Aharonian and her family, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Lara Aharonian as well as of the members of his family;
3. Guarantee that human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.