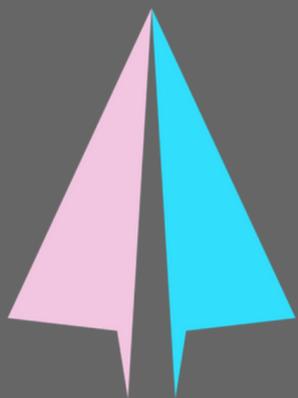


"I stand for tortured, raped, burnt, stabbed, killed, banished, discriminated, poor and unemployed transgender people of Armenia".



RIGHT SIDE

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO

TRANS ARMENIA



NEWSLETTER

MARCH-APRIL-MAY

2019



RIGHT SIDE

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO

VREZH VARZHAPETYAN PARTICIPATED IN THE “CREATIVE ADVOCACY” STUDY SESSION IN BUCHAREST

On the night of February 11th 2019, Vrezh Varzhapetyan, a staff member of the Right Side NGO, was assaulted by an unknown young man at the crossroad of Tumanyan and Koghbatsi streets in the center of Yerevan. After receiving serious physical and psychological injuries, Vrezh visited doctor and filled a complaint in the Police department. The central police department of the RA initiated a criminal case according to Article 118 of the RA Criminal Code (beating). Meanwhile, the case has been largely discussed by the the society in social Media. Vrezh still receives threats and hate speeches, on which a report has been submitted to the Police. The police has refused to initiate a criminal case on the grounds that there are no real threats, while the threats are available on the Facebook account of Vrezh and on the pages of other Facebook users. The Police has stated in its decision that Vrezh Varzhapetyan is “nuynaseramol” (ed: a term which used as an insult and marley is translated a homesuxal man with a sexual obsession with other man), and “Facebook users” expressed their anger with Vrezh being a “nuynaseramol”. Based on the above mentioned, Police has decided there are not enough materials to initiate a criminal case according to the Article 137 of the Criminal Code.

The refusal to initiate the criminal case based on the threats has been appealed to the General Prosecutor’s Office while the beating-related criminal case is in process.

Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO condemns such discriminatory and prejudiced approaches by legal bodies towards LGBT people and calls for a fair and impartial investigation.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

“English club with tea”

In the period of March-May 2019 social events titled “English club with tea” were held in the community safe space of the “Right Side” human rights defender NGO. English language specialists Hagop and Lucy from now on will held English courses for Trans and LGBTIQ community every Tuesday at 4pm



“Movie Discussion Social Club”

In the period fo March-May , 2019, “Movie Discussion Social Club” was held in the community safe space of the “Right Side” human rights defender NGO, which was held by Vrezh Varzhapetyan, an staff member of the organization.

Participants watched the first Russian LGBTIQ short horror movie, “pyotr495” and “Boys Don’t Cry”, a short movie about the discrimination and violence against queer makeup artists living in Moscow.

From now on, every Thursday, at 4 pm, Vrezh Varzhapetyan will held a “Movie Discussion Social Club” event for the TRANS and LGBTIQ community representatives, which will focus on watching and discussing various short movies and learning cinema skills.

Update on the physical abuse on Vrezh Varzhapetyan

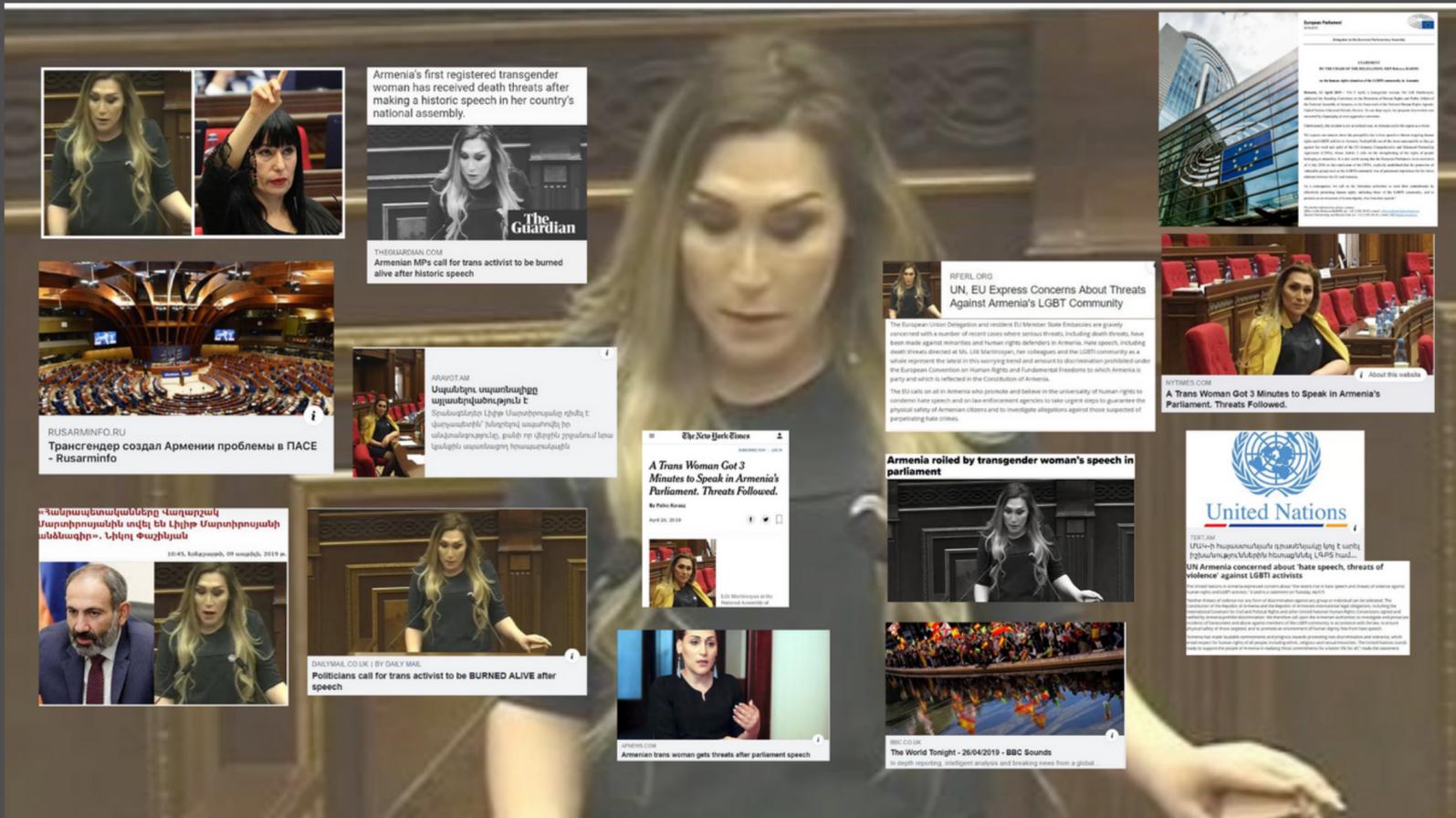
On March 13-16, Vrezh Varzhapetyan, an employee of the “Right Side” human rights defender NGO, participated in the “Creative Advocacy” study session in Bucharest, Romania, which was organized by Centrul de Resurse pentru participare publica – CeRe.

The goal was to explore the art, to apply the art on advocacy and activism, to master different creative tools and to use them properly in advocacy programs. Study session participants were from Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania and Armenia.

“Right Side” human rights defender NGO expresses its gratitude to Centrul de Resurse pentru participare publica – CeRe for the long lasting partnership.



PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON TRANSGENDER ISSUES AFTER LILIT'S SPEECH IN THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF THE RA.



"Right Side" human rights defender NGO summarised the public discourse on transgender issues after Lilit's speech in the National Parliament of the RA. The whole article you can find via this link: <https://bit.ly/2Hxh5OJ>



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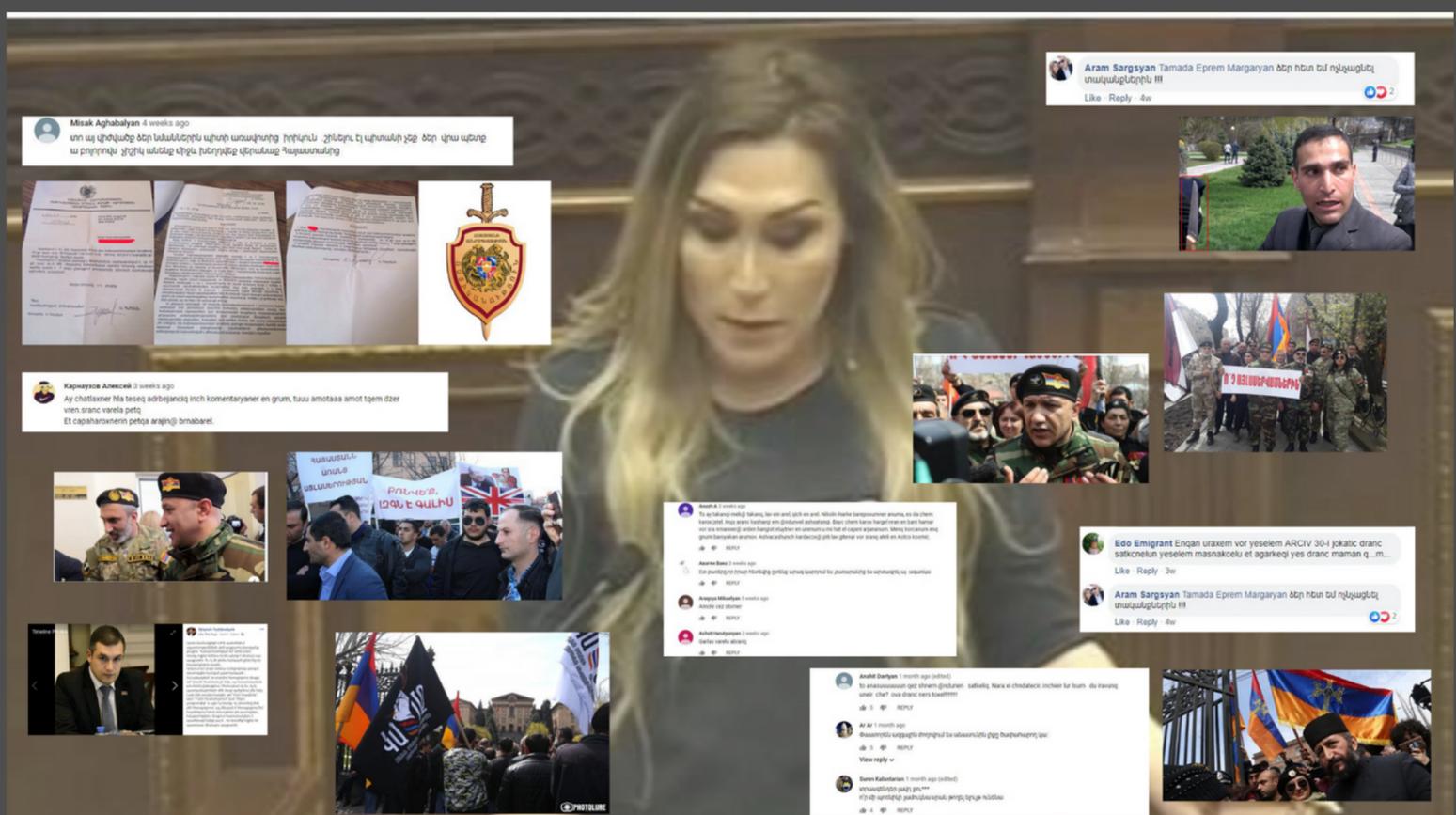
PUBLIC STATEMENT REGARDING THE REJECTION OF THE INITIATION OF CRIMINAL CASES BASED ON THE DEATH THREATS DIRECTED TO LILIT MARTIROSYAN

On April 5, 2019 after a public speech on transgender people’s rights during public hearings in the National Assembly of the RA, a new wave of hate speech and threats began against the president of “Right Side” human rights defender NGO transgender woman Lilit Martirosyan, her colleagues and LGBTIQ people.

On 06.04.2019 Lilit Martirosyan reported to the Central Police Station of the Republic of Armenia that after her speech at the National Assembly of the RA, the distributor of SAS supermarket chain illegally published her personal information on her residence address on his Facebook page. On the same day, Lilit Martirosyan reported that she had received lifethreats and violent messages released through public live broadcast on a video by a member of the militaristic group called “Eagle 30 mahapart Ararat”.

On 16.04.2019 the investigator of the department of Central Police Station of the RA Mr. Voskanian, without taking into consideration all the obvious evidence of real threats, made a decision to reject the initiation of criminal cases on the provided materials. However, the abovementioned decision was made with violations of rights of Lilit Martirosyan are subjected to elimination.

The whole statement you can read via this link: <https://bit.ly/2wdhhMG>





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PUBLIC CALL FOR TRANSGENDER RIGHTS PROTECTION

On May 17 the World marks the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. Many countries around the world celebrate gender and sexual diversity by organizing various public events. Unfortunately, transgender people in Armenia still remain targets of daily stigma, discrimination, violence and humiliation, because of the conservative values of the Armenian society and the lack of political will to ensure gender equality.

The level of hate against trans people escalates especially when number of radical groups, civil society representatives, religious leaders, politicians, journalists and other members of society do not stop sharing threats and hate speeches against transgender people and continue to remain unpunished.

At the same time, "Right Side" human rights defender NGO states that after Lilit Martirosyan's speech in the National Assembly, transgender human rights defenders in Armenia continue to suffer persecution, because the hate continues its escalation. All those who threatened are in freedom, while the Police failed to initiate any criminal case against them based on the number of reports by "Right Side" human rights defender NGO.

Taking into consideration the lack of legislation on anti-discrimination, hate speech, hate crime, raised number of violence against transgender people, unprotected transgender human rights defenders, the atmosphere of fear and impunity, "Right Side" human rights defender NGO calls:

to the politicians, the RA Government and MPs to,

ensure the development of legislation and policies aimed at the protection of transgender people rights, including, development of legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity and expression, criminalization of hate crimes committed on the ground of gender identity and expression, adoption of legislation that prohibits hate speech, development and adoption of medical protocols on gender reassignment surgeries and hormone replacement therapy, improvement of the legislation related to legal gender recognition based on self determination without, without compulsory medical interventions and forced sterilization, adoption of legislation guaranteeing the safety and security of transgender human rights defenders.

to the RA Police,

ensure the development of policies aimed at protecting the rights of transgender persons who are victims of violence, including, react and record the violence against transgender people as hate crimes based on gender identity and expression, react and record the threats against trans people as hate speech, to conduct fair, transparent and impartial investigations of cases of anti-trans violence, to stop using offensive and discriminatory terminology while communicating with trans people.

to the Religious organizations and leaders

Implement preaching based only on the values of love and respect, including:

accept the transgender believers in their churches,

promote the ideology of sexual and gender equality among their followers,

refrain from influencing political decisions, remembering that Armenia is a secular state where the church operates apart from politics.

to the Media organizations and journalists

Implement high quality and impartial professional activities, remembering about media impact on public life, including,

refrain from spreading offensive and degrading media outlets by transgender people,

stop publishing media materials that offend the dignity of transgender individuals,

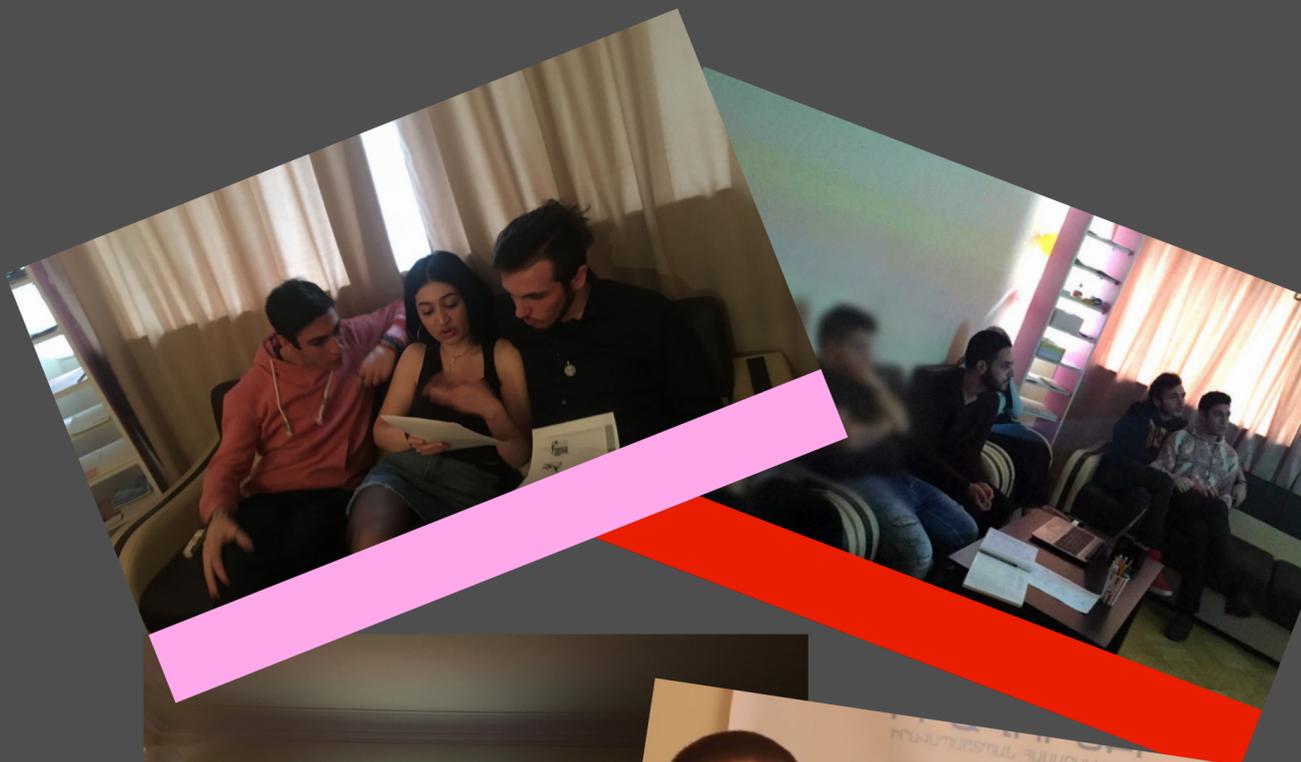
when covering issues of transgender people, to cooperate with the "Right Side" Human Rights Defender NGO in case of lack of relevant knowledge and information about the topic.

"Right Side" Human Rights Defender NGO also reminds that transgender people have always existed in our society and once again we call on all citizens to show solidarity and respect towards sexual and gender minorities in Armenia in order to strengthen the democracy building and achieve equality in Armenia.

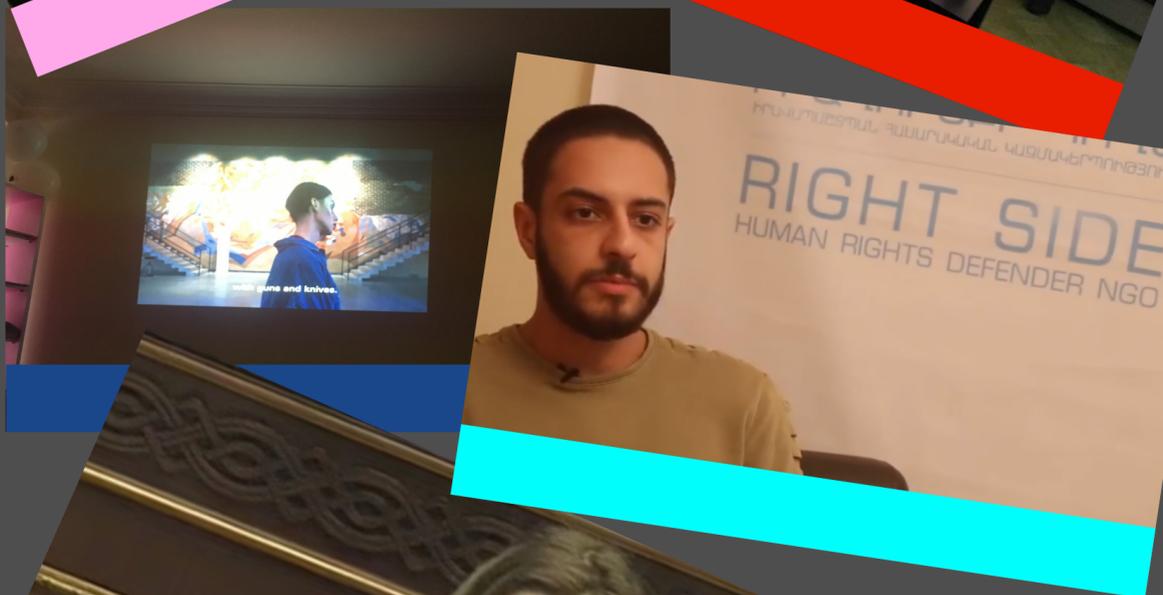


THE NUMBER OF THE EVENTS OF MARCH-APRIL-MAY

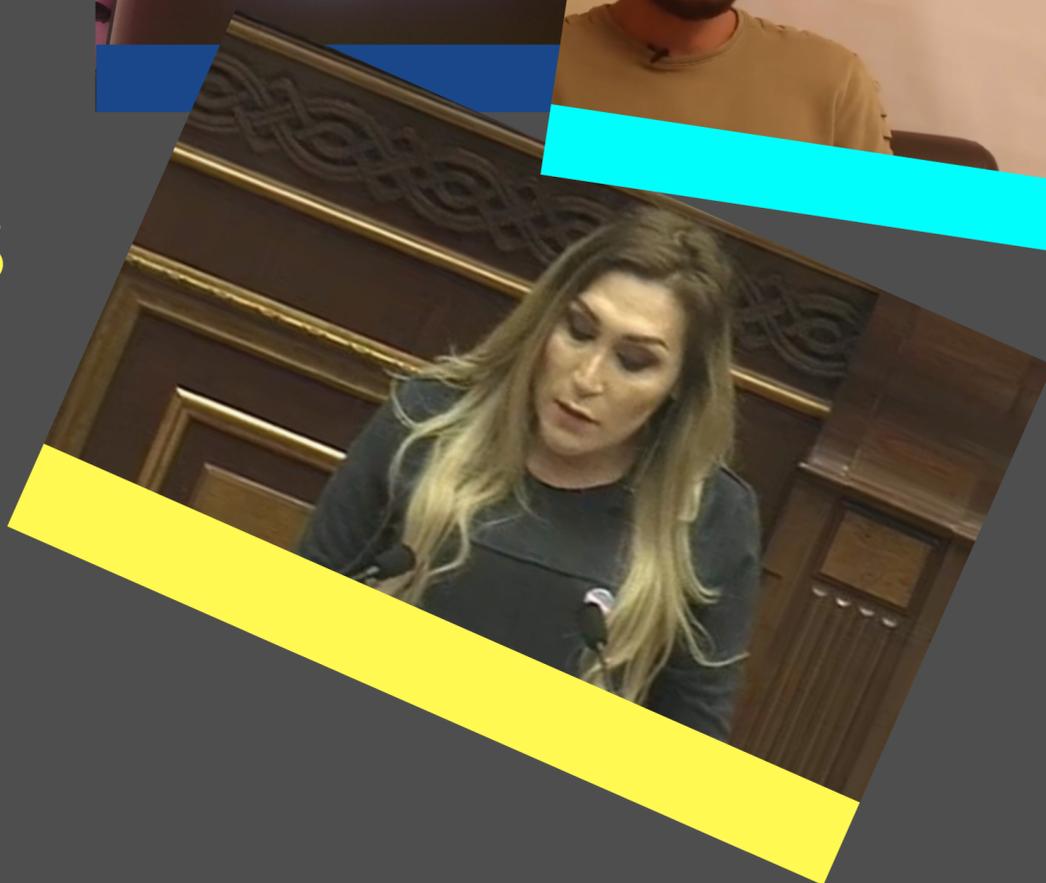
English club with tea **3**



Movie discussion social club **3**



Interview with journalists **15**



THE NUMBER OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE EVENTS OF MARCH-APRIL-MAY

58

2019

MARCH-APRIL-MAY

"RIGHT SIDE" HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO

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