



**RIGHT SIDE**  
HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO

**TRANS ARMENIA**



NEWSLETTER

JUNE



# RIGHT SIDE

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO

## “RIGHT SIDE” HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO ORGANIZED THE 3RD TRANS CAMP IN TSAGHKADZOR

“Right Side” human rights defender NGO organized the 3rd Trans Camp on June 17-19, 2019 in Tsaghkadzor. Founder and president of the organization Lilit Martirosyan officially opened the Trans camp. She introduced the history and achievements of the “Right Side” human rights defender NGO. The participants were introduced and got acquainted with each other. They set the rules of three days and shared their expectations for the camp. “Right Side” human rights defender NGO invited an international expert on gender issues to deliver the training. During the first day international expert opened training course on gender with the participants. Participants learned about sexuality, new international terms, such as biological sex, sexual behavior, gender, sexual orientation, and gender-based sexual orientation. The participants also learned leader’s skills. The day continued with active discussion of biological theories of gender and gender identity, and then the expert introduced the characteristic features of the leader. According to one of the participants, “Training was very interesting, so much information in this short period of time and losing the sense of time was just fantastic, and even the school schedules are not so full, and I hope these camps will be continuous.” Another participant expressed gratitude by saying: “This is the third time the “Right Side” NGO is holding Trans Camp, raising issues and problems in Armenia, consolidating LGBTIQ people and activists under one roof, it is very big responsibility” Another participant said: “It is also a great support for all sex workers in Armenia, we learned a lot during the training, we were also able to get out of our everyday troubles and problems.” On the second day of the third camp, Lilit Martirosyan, president and founder of the “Right Side” Human Rights Defender NGO, spoke about hormonal therapy and sex. It is a problem facing each trans-person in Armenia. He noted that there are no endocrinologists who have been trained and hormone therapy in Armenia, which is very painful. Over the years, Human Rights Watch has raised these issues and offers solutions, but unfortunately it remains unanswered by the Ministry of Health. “Program Coordinator” Vrezh Varzhapetyan talked about cyber security and social networks. The problem was quite up-to-date for all camp participants. Getting acquainted with the safer ways of social networking, the participants directed Vrezh their questions that they were concerned with and received answers on them. With help of Vrezh participants checked how safe their social network passwords were, and they received advice on how to be careful about their own security.





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The next topic was on Sexual Health, and it was held by Healthcare Programs Director Dora. She discussed ways of HIV virus transfer, as well about its development, detection and prevention of the virus. Participants were provided with a tour of the AIDS prevention Center. Ashot Gevorgyan, Policy and programs officer, spoke about the ways to contact with the state bodies. They introduced participants to the activities of the Human Rights Defender and the Constitutional Court. They taught the participants how to write applications, complaints and at the end of the lesson, they urged them to be unbearable and proud. Among the participants there were also sex workers, some of whom shared their personal stories and told their happy and sad life. The conversation took place quite emotionally and exciting. Lilit Martirosyan, told how sex workers are being beaten in their homes, being threaten, months ago, when transphobic person tried to burn one of sex workers in her home and story of a sex worker's whom throat was cut. “Right Side” human rights defender NGO once again proved during the Third Trans Camp that people are independent of their identity. The last day of the camp was full of interactive games and team discussions. At the end of the day, Lilit Martirosyan gave certificates on attending to participants Lilit Martirosyan noted that the trans camp will be continuous because it supports community members to know each other, unites LGBTIQ people and activists and helps to have a stronger LGBTIQ community in the whole Caucasus region. The camp was organized by “Right Side” human rights defender NGO and with the financial support of the European Endowment of Democracy.



## 4 UNKNOWN YOUNG MEN TRIED TO ATTACK ON A GROUP OF 11 LGBT PEOPLE AND ACTIVISTS IN THE “ENGLISH” PARK.

On June 20th of 2019, at 21: 00-21: 30, 4 unknown young men tried to attack on a group of 11 LGBT people and activists in the “English” park.

One of the activists, M.S, when noticed that one of the young men approaches them, she pulled off an electric shocker from the bag, used the electroshock to make noises and scare the group. Then the group aggressively talked with LGBT activists, and during the conversation with the group one of them tried to have a private talk with one of the activists.

In order to prevent a possible conflict between the two groups, Lilit Martirosyan immediately called the police, and within a few minutes the police team arrived at the mentioned place. After the arrival of the police, police officers recommended LGBT activists to leave the park. Two of the activists, M.S. and Lilit Martirosyan accompanied by the police, approached the group and tried to understand the situation. The police decided to take them to the police station. Right Side human rights defender NGO has provided legal support to the LGBT activists. Both M.S. and Lilit Martirosyan filled a report at the Police Department. LGBT activists stated that the group bullied them because of their gender identity, and expression and assumed sexual orientation. the Police is e carrying out an investigation. Right Side human rights defender NGO calls for the transparent, fair and impartial investigation. “Right Side” human rights defender NGO will monitor police work and will frequently update about the situation.



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# Driver's humiliating behavior towards trans woman

On June 22 of 2019, around 22:00-22:30, Lilit Martirosyan, founder and president of the “Right Side” human rights defender NGO, ordered a car with a Yandex Taxi mobile application. Sahakyan Hovhannes, the driver of the Opel Astra car (35XU780). the journey was planned from Arshakunyats street to the Republic Square. The driver recognized Lilit and started bullying her and asked her who needs to serve in the army instead for her. Then the driver increased the speed of the car, while Lilit was screaming. Lilit Martirosyan reported the incident on the same day, and submitted a complaint to “Yandex Taxi” service. “Right Side” human rights defender NGO calls to Yandex Taxi to introduce internal policies to ensure non discrimination and safe journey of consumers. It is evident that after Lilit Martirosyan’s speech at the National Assembly, a number of transgender individuals have repeatedly been subjected with discriminatory attitude because of their gender identity. “Right Side” human rights defender NGO calls on the RA Police to undertake a transparent and legitimate investigation.



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**Y**andex



# 7 LATIN-AMERICANS TRANSGENDER PEOPLE INFORMED “RIGHT SIDE” HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NGO THAT THEY HAVE APPLIED FOR THE ASYLUM IN THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA.



In June, a group of 7 Latin-Americans transgender people informed “Right Side” human rights defender NGO that they have applied for the asylum in the Republic of Armenia. In the framework of one of “Right Side” NGO strategy human rights protection strategy our staff provided trans asylum seekers with the necessary legal, social psychological and other and other assistance. “Right Side” human rights defender NGO, in collaboration with the KASA Swiss office in Armenia, organized for transgender asylum seekers Armenian language courses. The organization has also contacted with number of organizations working with asylum-seekers and referred them people to receive social support. “Right Side” Healthcare Program Officer organized a series of health-related training sessions for transgender people, during which she provided educational materials on sexual health, HIV/ AIDS and STI. The organization referred transgender asylum seekers to the National Center for AIDS Prevention HIV testing. According to transgender asylum seekers, they were targeted to various violence, discrimination, transphobia, xenophobia and racism since the first day of their arrival into Armenia “Right Side” human rights defender is preparing the necessary materials to apply to the police “Right Side” human rights defender NGO monitor the work of Migration service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration to ensure that the process of asylum is in line with the international standards. It should be reminded that Armenia has an international commitment and responsibility to provide protection to those in need regardless of their gender identity, sexual orientation, color, race, and a number of other characteristics.



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## ARMENIA FAILED TO PROTECT TRANSGENDER WOMAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER LILIT MARTIROSYAN

UN Joint Special procedures of the Human Rights Council addressed on 18 April 2019 addressed the Permanent Mission of The Republic of Armenia questions regarding the safety, security and death threats against Lilit Martirosyan after her speech made in the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia the Permanent Mission of The Republic of Armenia responded on the joint communication responding that “Armenia achieved unprecedented freedom of speech and considered a free country”. Armenia also mentioned in the communication that there are draft laws about equal opportunities and hate speech, but we need to highlight that these draft bills do not include gender identity and expression as aggravating circumstances and do not specifically protect human rights defenders at risk. For detailed communication please follow the links below. We would like to remind that Armenian authorities failed to protect transgender human rights defenders after Lilit’s speech in the Parliament and the staff of “Right Side” Human Rights Defender NGO with their family members have been evacuated from the country. Trans rights defenders received death threats from militaristic, ultra-right wing conservative groups. The police has refused to initiate a criminal case because the threats were not “real”. The decision is appealed to the Prosecutor and the Ombudsmen

## TRANSGENDER HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER PROTECTION NOW

#ShameArmenia  
#TransArmenia  
#RightSideNGO



UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS



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# ARMENIA FAILED TO PROTECT TRANSGENDER WOMAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER LILIT MARTIROSYAN

It was a huge risk and courage for the Armenian transgender woman Lilit Martirosyan, the president of the first trans community-based NGO in Armenia, to walk into the parliamentary hall, stand up before lawmakers, and make history through her speech on trans equality on April 5th, 2019. After her speech dedicated to “tortured, raped, kidnapped, subjected to physical violence, burned, immolated, knifed, subjected to murder attempt, killed, emigrated, and robbed trans people” and her call upon the lawmakers to carry out reforms and policies to achieve gender equality, and to ensure human rights for everyone, she with other activists, has been targeted and got death threats.

All the mess began from the day of the parliamentary listenings, when after the speech of Lilit Martirosyan the Chairperson of the NA Standing Committee on Protection of Human Rights and Public Affairs Naira Zohrabyan cried out loudly about Lilit’s speech mentioning that the issues of transgender people had not been on the agenda as no one is violating their rights and talking about that topic is disrespectful to her and to the parliament. Lilit Martirosyan and other human rights defenders feeling insulted left the hall of the National Assembly. After her historical speech both local and international organizations and media wrote about this incident, but quite in different spectrum of perceptions. The international prima media representatives and international organizations like [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com), [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), [www.BBC.CO.UK](http://www.BBC.CO.UK), [www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk), [www.eeas.europa.eu](http://www.eeas.europa.eu), [www.eurasianet.org](http://www.eurasianet.org), [www.frontlinedefenders.org](http://www.frontlinedefenders.org), [www.tgeu.org](http://www.tgeu.org), [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org), [www.thebluntpost.com](http://www.thebluntpost.com), etc.



The European Union Delegation and resident EU Member State Embassies are gravely concerned with a number of recent cases where serious threats, including death threats, have been made against minorities and human rights defenders in Armenia. Hate speech, including death threats directed at Ms. Lilit Martirosyan, her colleagues and the LGBTI community as a whole represent the latest in this worrying trend and amount to discrimination prohibited under the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms to which Armenia is party and which is reflected in the Constitution of Armenia.

The EU calls on all in Armenia who promote and believe in the universality of human rights to condemn hate speech and on law enforcement agencies to take urgent steps to guarantee the physical safety of Armenian citizens and to investigate allegations against those suspected of perpetrating hate crimes.



**Armenia roiled by transgender woman’s speech in parliament**





# THE NUMBER OF ORGANIZATION'S SAFE SPACE OF JUNE MONTH

47



2019

JUNE

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