

Head of Zakarpattya Region Police
Roman Stefanyshyn
Uzhgorod
Vul. F. Rakotsi, 13
88000
Ukraine

Dear Mr. Stefanyshyn,

I am writing to you regarding violence against peaceful demonstrators across Ukraine during and after the marches marking International Women's Day on 8 March.

On 8 March, a group of about ten women's rights activists in Uzhgorod, Western Ukraine, held a peaceful march to mark International Women's Day. During the march, a group of four women and two men from the right-wing organization, Karpatska Sich attacked participants and doused them in red paint. Vitalina Koval, a women's rights and LGBTI activist, and one of the event organizers, was among those attacked. She is currently being treated for chemical burns to her eye as a result of the paint attack. The police detained the group of attackers and charged three of them with hooliganism and hate crimes, only to release them a few hours later.

On 12 March, members of Karpatska Sich surrounded activist and International Women's Day march participant, Aleksandr Peresolyak in a café and threatened him with violence. After the incident, Karpatska Sich posted a photo on its Facebook page of 18 men in black with their faces blurred, some of them making the Nazi salute. The caption of the photo read "(this is) one of the nationalist groups that is imposing order in the city and teaching lessons to [those] who are paid by the government or criminals, and are ready to forget about morality, the laws of dignity, moral conscience and fulfill the ordered tasks".

On 13 March, local activist Ivan Danatsko went to the local police station and filed a complaint against a planned right-wing demonstration due to take place on 17 March because it would likely feature Nazi symbols, which are banned under Ukrainian law. Ivan Danatsko posted a photo of his complaint on Facebook and three hours later was attacked by members of Karpatska Sich on the streets of Uzhgorod. On the same day, Ivan Dyulay, who also attended the march on 8 March, was also attacked and beaten in Uzhgorod city center, in broad daylight.

Such attacks have taken place in 2017 and 2018 as well hence I call upon you to take appropriate steps. Please conduct a prompt, effective and impartial investigation into all attacks perpetrated against activists, and ensure those responsible are held to account and ensure a safe and enabling environment for activists in Uzhgorod to exercise their right to freedom of assembly and expression by issuing effective protection measures to safeguard activists, particularly women's rights and LGBTIQ activists, from further attack or

intimidation.

Yours sincerely,