



EU-RUSSIA CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM ГРАЖДАНСКИЙ ФОРУМ ЕС-РОССИЯ

Call for Justice and Duly Investigation of the Attack on Andrei Rudomakha and Other Activists of the “Environmental Watch on North Caucasus” Statement by the Working Group “Environment” of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum

The Working Group “Environment” of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum firmly condemns the violent attack aimed at Andrei Rudomakha, Coordinator at the “Environmental Watch of North Caucasus” (EWNC), and other activists of the organisation on 28 December 2017 in Krasnodar, Russia¹. We call for a duly investigation of the crime and demand to bring perpetrators to justice.

In the late evening of 28 December 2017, three men wearing balaclavas severely injured Andrei Rudomakha on his way back from documenting new constructions infringing environmental rules on the Black Sea coast². The attackers were waiting for Andrei and his colleagues as they exited their vehicle; the criminals beat and kicked Andrei in the face, leaving him unconscious. His colleague Viktor Chirikov was punched in the stomach, whilst a third member of the organisation was pepper-sprayed. The assaulters stole equipment, cameras, and computers from the vehicle before disappearing. Mr Rudomakha was brought to the hospital and is currently undergoing treatment. He has got a cerebral concussion, his nose was broken, and his skull was fractured.

There is reason to assert that this attack was carefully planned. Assaulters had information on Andrei Rudomakha’s and his colleagues’ travel itinerary as well as on the place of their residence.

EWNC and its members have continually been a subject to ungrounded persecution. Evgeni Vitishko, its Council member, had to spend several years in detention upon a framed up case³. Suren Gazarian, one of its prominent members, had to flee Russia and ask for an asylum in Estonia⁴. In April 2017, the house rented by Pavel Suganeev was ransacked and equipment was stolen⁵. In September 2016, masked men brutally beat EWNC and Greenpeace Russia volunteer firefighters during a training in the Krasnodar Region, leaving two of them severely injured⁶. And

¹ See also <http://www.ewnc.org/node/24972> (in Russian)

² See more at <https://zona.media/news/2017/12/29/rudo> (in Russian)

³ See more at <http://freevitishko.org>

⁴ See inter alia the Statement by the Steering Committee of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum of 8 May 2014 at http://eu-russia-csf.org/fileadmin/Statements/StatementSurenGazaryan05_05_2014_en.pdf

⁵ See more at <http://ewnc.org/node/24082> (in Russian)

⁶ See more at <http://www.ewnc.org/node/23022> (in Russian)

