



Lawyers Committee for Human Rights

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PRESS RELEASE

On the subject of the series of public attacks on Ms Sonja Biserko, president of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights – YUCOM has contacted the Ministry of Interior and the National Security Agency (BIA), asking for the series of measures to be taken in order to hamper possible grave consequences of these attacks. In addition, an official assessment of the security status of Ms Sonja Biserko was requested from the Ministry of Interior.

The attacks, which had started in media, have spread to include physical attack on the premises of Helsinki Committee in Serbia, and the place of residence of Ms Biserko, just as to culminate in the open letter written to Ms Biserko by Milorad Ulemek, published in daily Kurir on October 6, 2008, where he joins the crowd of previous attackers on Ms Biserko, and throws a wave of personal insults to Ms Biserko.

Non-governmental organizations demand that state institutions start applying the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders adopted by United Nations General Assembly on March 8, 1999 (Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Right and Fundamental Freedoms). The Declaration, in Article 12 Clause 2, provides that the **state must undertake all necessary measures to ensure protection from any kind of violence**, threat of retaliation, *de facto* and *de jure* hostile discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary deed resulting from the legitimate use of one's rights guaranteed by the Declaration.

Biljana Kovačević-Vučo

Chairperson

Belgrade, October 7th, 2008.



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