

8 November 2016

Russian Federation: Attempted break-in of human rights defender Temur Kobaliya's home

On 3 November 2016, the officers of the Criminal Intelligence Service of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs attempted to break into the house of human rights defender, Mr **Temur Kobaliya**.

[Temur Kobaliya](#) is the Head of the **Volgograd Human Rights Council**, a group of human rights defenders and organisations that provides legal counselling, and conducts human rights campaigns and education in Volgograd. The human rights defender is also the former Director of the human rights organisation **Youth Centre for Consulting and Training**, an organisation that provides legal consulting to socially disadvantaged groups and non-governmental organisations. In 2014, Temur Kobaliya was also one of the founders of the **National Internet Channel of Non-Governmental organisations (NGOTV)**, that broadcasts in order to promote the work of civil society and provide a space for public dialogue on human rights and socio-political issues.

On 3 November, 2016 at approximately 5:00 a.m, officers of the Criminal Intelligence Service attempted to break into Temur Kobaliya's apartment when the human rights defender was not home. The break-in attempt by the officers was thwarted when Temur Kobaliya's neighbour intervened and asked to see a search warrant. The officers did not provide a search warrant and only stated that the attempt to search Temur Kobaliya's apartment was a part of an allegedly ongoing criminal case. Without giving any further clarifications, the officers questioned the neighbour about the human rights work of Temur Kobaliya and left the apartment building.

In December 2014, the Russian Ministry of Justice recognised the Youth Centre for Consulting and Training as a 'foreign agent'. After an array of public actions against the Court decision, in July 2015, the organisation was taken off the record of organisations with the status of 'foreign agents'. However, on 26 October 2015, the Volgograd Court fined the Youth Centre for Consulting and Training and Temur Kobaliya for the amount of 3000 RUB and 1000 RUB accordingly on the charge of publicising information about an organisation without mentioning its status as 'a foreign agent'. In response to the fine the human rights defender filed a complaint before the European Court of Human Rights.

Front Line Defenders expresses its concern at the attempted break-in of Temur Kobaliya's home, which is believed to be an attempt to intimidate the human rights defender and prevent him from continuing his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights in the Russian Federation.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in the Russian Federation to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the attempted break-in of Temur Kobaliya's apartment with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Cease targeting human rights defenders and guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in the Russian Federation are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.