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Dear Prosecutor,

I am writing to express my indignation about the arrest and prosecution of Yulia Tsvetkova, an artist and activist from Komsomolsk-on-Amur. She is facing criminal and administrative proceedings that have been initiated on absurd grounds.

On 20 November Yulia Tsvetkova was arbitrarily detained, questioned by police, and her flat was searched. She has been under house arrest since 22 November, while there is an ongoing "investigation" against her under charges of "production and dissemination of pornography", a crime which carries a penalty of up to six years in prison. The grounds for the criminal proceedings against her are her drawings of the female body.

Yulia Tsvetkova is facing relentless harassment: on several occasions the investigator denied her requests to visit her dentist, and on 5 February she was subjected to a psychiatric examination. She has also been targeted under the Code of Administrative Offences. On 11 December, she was issued with an extortionate fine of 50,000 rubles (US\$ 780) for so-called "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations among minors" on account of being the administrator of two LGBTI-themed online communities. These proceedings arise under the homophobic legislation which expressly discriminates against LGBTI people and violates their right to freedom of expression. These proceedings are absurd and unfounded, even under Russian law, as both online communities in question were marked "18+", as required by Russian law, and as such were not targeted at minors. Further administrative proceedings have been instigated against Yulia Tsvetkova for the same "offence".

The only true reason Yulia Tsvetkova is facing prosecution is her activism, through which she seeks to promote and defend women's rights and the rights of LGBTI people and exercising her right to freedom of expression. She is a prisoner of conscience and should be immediately and unconditionally released.

I urge you to take all necessary steps to end Yulia Tsvetkova's prosecution, under both criminal and administrative charges, and to ensure her immediate and unconditional release.

Yours sincerely,