

Boris Viktorovich Kononenko
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Russian Federation
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Dear Prosecutor,

I am writing to express my deepest concern regarding the prosecution of Yulia Tsvetkova under false charges of “production and dissemination of pornographic materials” (Article 242(3b) of the Russian Criminal Code) as her sentencing approaches and worryingly on 14 June the prosecution requested a jail term of three and a half years.

Yulia Tsvetkova is an artist from Komsomolsk-on-Amur who has been continually targeted over the years for her human rights activism. Since 2019, she has been prosecuted for her artistic work depicting bodies of women, and faced harassment by police, including repeated house and workplace searches. She spent almost four months under house arrest until March 2020 and has been under travel restrictions since. She has committed no recognizable criminal offence, which has been confirmed by some respected Russian legal experts during her trial.

Yulia Tsvetkova has also repeatedly faced administrative proceedings and fines under the discriminatory “gay propaganda” legislation (Article 6.21 of the Code of Administrative Offences). She has faced homophobic threats, abuse and harassment, over the phone, via social networks, and by mail, as has her mother.

Yulia Tsvetkova is facing reprisals for exercising her right to freedom of expression, which violates both Russia’s Constitution and its obligations under international human rights law.

In light of the above, I urge you to immediately drop the criminal case and end all administrative proceedings against Yulia Tsvetkova.

Yours sincerely,