

Statement by the Spokesperson on the human rights abuses of gay men in Chechnya

According to reports by international human rights organisations and by the media, over a hundred gay men in the Russian Republic of Chechnya have been abducted in recent days, as part of a coordinated campaign. The abducted men have reportedly been tortured and otherwise ill-treated, and forced to disclose other LGBTI individuals they know. Reports also indicate that at least three men have been killed by their captors.

If confirmed, these serious human rights violations would add to the long list of human rights abuses in Chechnya. Instead of supporting the rights of the victims, some officials of the Chechen Republic have even attempted to justify the violence against them. The Russian authorities have taken international human rights commitments that bind them at all levels to ensure the safety of all persons who may be at risk in Chechnya due to their sexual orientation.

Prompt, effective and thorough investigations into the reports of abductions and killings of gay men in Chechnya are indispensable so that anyone found guilty of or complicit in such crimes is brought to justice.