

19
Dec 2019

▲ Lvl. 1

State replied

France

n° 56/2018

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Police Failure to Respond to the Serious Threats a Journalist Received Online

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ Non-state

CATEGORY  ▶ Harassment and intimidation of journalists

PARTNER: RSF

Julie Hainaut, a French Lyon-based freelancer who writes for Le Petit Bulletin, a newspaper about Lyon culture, found herself at the centre of an exceptionally violent online media storm last September after reporting that the owners of a bar had spoken approvingly about the colonial era. She received numerous insults and very serious threats, her home address was published online, and people waited for her in front of her home on two different occasions. She lodged 4 separate complaints to the police since then, but has received no feedback or follow-up to these complaints, even though it would be very simple to identify people or websites involved in these threats. The public prosecutor, when asked, was not aware of her case.

UPDATES

19 Dec 2019: On 17 December 2019, the Lyon criminal court sentenced an Internet user, who had disseminated an article insulting journalist Julie Hainaut, to a six-month suspended prison term. The court also ordered him to pay Hainaut €5,000 in damages and €2,000 in legal costs.

28 Nov 2019: On 19 November 2019, Sylvain C. appeared before the Lyon criminal court on charges of “public insults of a racial nature” over his sharing of a violent article from the “DémocratieParticipative.biz” website targeting Julie Hainaut. The indictment requested one year of imprisonment. The judgment is due on 17 December 2019.

➔ **Article from "Le Monde" (in French): "Julie Hainaut, harcelée sur Internet par des néonazis, attend toujours justice"**

19 Nov 2018: On 18 October 2018, the Paris Public Prosecutor summoned telecommunications operators before the Paris court of first instance with a view to block the website “DemocratieParticipative.biz” that publishes hateful and violent content.

- ➔ Article from "Le Monde" (in French): "La justice tente de bloquer l'un des principaux sites de la fachosphère"

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ➔ Article published by Rue89Lyon: "Le cyberharcèlement est aussi violent qu'un coup de poing"
- ➔ Article published by Liberation: "Cyberharcèlement envers une journaliste : le SNJ dénonce l'inactivité du gouvernement"

STATE REPLIES



18 Jul 2018 | Reply of the French authorities

- ➔ Letter from the French Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe

FOLLOW-UPS

 19 Dec 2019 | OSCE Media Freedom Representative welcomes the 6-month suspended sentence and the €5,000 fine handed down to a man responsible for harassing the journalist Julie Hainaut: "Online threats against female journalists are unbearable and have no place in society."

- ➔ Tweet by Harlem Désir

FREELANCERS

Key information :

Julie Hainaut

A Lyon-based freelancer who writes for Le Petit Bulletin about Lyon culture.