

APPEAL

of the representatives of Russian civil society

to:

Chancellor of Austria Wolfgang Schussel

Prime Minister of Belgium Guy Verhofstadt

Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair

Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel

Prime Minister of Denmark Anders Fogh Rasmussen

Prime Minister of Spain Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero

Prime Minister of Italy Silvio Berlusconi

Prime Minister of Latvia Aigars Kalvitis

Prime Minister of Lithuania Algirdas Brazauskas

Prime Minister of Luxembourg Jean Claude Juncker

Prime Minister of the Netherlands Jan Peter Balkenende

Prime Minister of Norway Jens Stoltenberg

President of Poland Lech Kaczynski

President of the United States of America George Bush

Prime Minister of Finland Matti Vanhanen

President of France Jacques Chirac

President of Czech Republic Vaclav Klaus

Prime Minister of Sweden Goran Persson

We, the representatives of Russian human rights organizations, scientific, cultural and political figures, establish with alarm the fact that politically motivated processes going on in Russia obviously point out at the real danger of mass persecutions of dissenters, revival of unlawfulness and suppression of civil rights.

This danger followed President Putin and his KGB-coworkers' arrival at the highest echelons of power: today these people occupy the majority of the country's leading positions. It is at the time of their functioning mass politically motivated persecutions became reality, when citizens are charged with state treason, divulgence of State secrets and economic offences on the basis of evidence concocted by the FSB or the Prosecutor's office. Nowadays there is no more

doubt as to the fact of suppression of democratic institutions and repartition of property in Russia, performed by “forces agencies” and courts. Lawyers are also subject to unexampled persecutions and accusations.

Within the past few years, the following persons became victims of far-fetched criminal persecutions: Alexander Nikitin (ecologist), Grigoriy Pasko (journalist), Nikolay Tschur (ecologist), Victor Kalyadin (entrepreneur), Vladimir Soyfer (scientist), Valentin Moiseev (diplomat and scientist), Igor Sutyagi (scientist), Valentin Danilov (scientist), Anatoliy Babkin (scientist), Juriy Khvorostov (scientist), Vladimir Schurov (scientist), Victor Akulichev (scientist), Victor Kovalchuk (inventor), John Tobbin (probationer), Sergey Brovchenko (lawyer), Olga Tsepilova (sociologist), environmental organization “Baykalskaya Volna”, Zara Murtazalieva (student), activists of the National Bolshevik Party (NBP), Mikhail Khodorkovskiy (entrepreneur), Platon Lebedev (entrepreneur), Svetlana Bakhmina (lawyer), Mikhail Trepashkin (lawyer), Oscar Kaybyshev (scientist)... Hundreds and thousands of people have fallen victims to unlawful and arbitrary actions of authorities in different regions of Russia, including Bashkiriya and Chechnya. These days, the number of people persecuted for political reasons has amounted to that of the USSR.

In our view, one of the main reasons for escalation of antidemocratic processes in Russia is an inert and inconsistent feedback of the heads of the European countries with regard to mass violations of human rights in Russia.

We invite the heads of the European Union countries, authoritative international organizations as well as human rights community to demand in an open and explicit way that the Russian Federation fulfills every legal and humanitarian obligation assumed by it, including the Helsinki Convention. The issue of observance of human rights in Russia is related to the European security and is as urgent as it was 30 years ago.

At the background of numerous violations of democratic norms and human rights in Russia, particular cruelty and sophistication features processes against scientists Igor Sutyagin and Valentin Danilov, lawyer Mikhail Trepashkin, student Zara Murtazalieva, as well as entrepreneurs Mikhail Khodorkovskiy and Platon Lebedev. All of them were convicted by “pocket” courts, without any legally significant proof of their guilt underlying their conviction.

The main reason for criminal persecution of Mr. Khodorkovskiy and Mr. Lebedev is their open and active support of political and civil opposition. In our view, their arrest, detention and unlawful conviction were accompanied by such circumstances, which are meant to act as the Kremlin’s warning to anyone dissenting from the official opinion.

We are convinced of the fact that Mr. Sutyagin, Mr. Danilov, Mr. Trepashkin, Ms. Murtazalieva, Mr. Khodorkovskiy and Mr. Lebedev’s conviction was politically motivated and is meant as a deterrent regarding the society in general and Russian intelligentsia in particular.

The European Union countries and their heads have adopted a tolerant attitude towards a repressive system established in Russia, omnipotence of special services, judiciary that is dependent upon the executive power and Mr. Putin personally, who is the ideologist of a cruel suppression of the opposition. Such attitude is nurturing new dictators in Europe.

We ask you to facilitate the recognition of Mr. Danilov, Mr. Trepashkin, Ms. Murtazalieva, Mr. Khodorkovskiy and Mr. Lebedev as political prisoners.

We invite you to avail yourselves of all powers at your disposal in order to influence President Putin as well as the corresponding structures of the Council of Europe, so that a speedy, impartial and open re-trial of the cases of Mr. Sutyagin, Mr. Danilov, Mr. Trepashkin, Ms. Murtazalieva, Mr. Khodorkovskiy and Mr. Lebedev be ensured.

We hope that democratic governments will do their best to prevent Russia from stumbling into its totalitarian past with a dictatorial regime, which is as dangerous for the country itself as for the international community in general.

Yours sincerely,

Yuriy Afanasyev, President of the Russian State Humanitarian University

Lyudmila Alekseeva, Moscow Helsinki Group

Andrey Babushkin, public charity foundation “For civil rights”

Svetlana Gannushkina, Committee of assistance to refugees “Civil assistance”

Vitaliy Ginzburg, Academician, RAS; Nobel Prize winner

Vladimir Kara-Murza, journalist

Garri Kasparov, United Civil Front, world chess champion

Sergey Kovalev, Human Rights Institute, prisoner of conscience

Grigoriy Pasko, journalist, prisoner of conscience

Lev Ponomarev, All-Russian movement “For human rights”

Yuriy Ryzhov, Academician, RAS; National Prize and President of Russia Prize winner

Vladimir Ryzhkov, Republican Party leader, deputy of the RF State Duma

Yuriy Samodurov, Andrei Sakharov Museum and Public Center

Aleksey Simonov, Glasnost Defense Foundation

Aleksandr Tkachenko, Russian PEN-center, director general; writer

Lyudmila Ulitskaya, writer

Ernst Cherniy, head of the Ecology and Human Rights Coalition.

Aleksey Yablokov, Academician, RAS; leader of “Green Russia” party, Center for Russian Environmental Policy

Rev. Gleb Yakunin, Public Committee in Defense of Freedom of Conscience