

URGENT ACTION

BOLOTNAYA APPEAL APPROACHING

An appeal by eight Bolotnaya protesters will be heard by Moscow City Court on 19 June. All of them are victims of a politically motivated trial. All seven behind bars should be released.

Moscow City Court will hold an appeal hearing on 19 June in the case of eight Bolotnaya protesters: **Andrey Barabanov, Yaroslav Belousov, Aleksandra Dukhanina (Naumova), Sergey Krivov, Denis Lutskevich, Aleksey Polikhovich, Artiom Saviolov and Stepan Zimin.** They appealed against the verdict issued on 24 February finding them guilty of “participation in mass riots” and “use of violence against a public official”. Seven of them were sentenced to prison terms while Aleksandra Dukhanina (Naumova) received a conditional sentence. Prior to their sentencing most of the protesters had already spent around one and a half year in detention.

Amnesty International has concluded that their trial was politically motivated. The organization believes that the qualification of the events in Bolotnaya Square as “mass riots” was motivated by political, not factual considerations and that the convictions on charges of “participation in mass riots” should be overturned.

Amnesty International is calling for immediate release of all protesters. Six of them - Artiom Saviolov, Denis Lutskevich, Yaroslav Belousov, Sergey Krivov, Stepan Zimin and Aleksey Polikhovich – are prisoners of conscience. As for Andrey Barabanov, irrespective of whether he committed the offence of “using violence against a public official” or not, he has already served more time than the sentence he has been given for this offence and should also be released.

The trials of four other protesters and of the two men who the prosecution claims to be organizers of “mass riots” are ongoing in Moscow at the moment. In the end of May three more people were arrested in connection with events in Bolotnaya Square on 6 May 2012. Two of them were charged with “participation in mass riots” and released under travel restrictions. The third one was also charged with “use of violence against a public official” and is now in detention.

Please write immediately in Russian or your own language:

- Urging the Prosecutor General to support the appeal and request for immediate release of all Bolotnaya prisoners;
- Urging him to ensure that charges of participation in mass riots are dropped in relation to all other people under investigation or standing trial in connection with Bolotnaya events and they are given a fair trial.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 JULY 2014 TO:

Prosecutor General

Yurii Ya. Chaika

Bolshaia Dmitrovka 15 A

125993 Moscow

Russian Federation

Fax: +7 495 692 1725

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 46/14. Further information:

<http://amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR46/016/2014/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Hundreds of peaceful anti-government protesters were arrested during the Bolotnaya Square protest on 6 May 2012 which police dispersed using excessive and abusive force. Although the demonstration was predominantly peaceful, and all violence limited to certain areas and involved only a small number of protesters, the authorities described the event as “mass riots”, which allowed them to bring heavier charges against the accused.

Criminal proceedings were begun against 28 people, 11 of whom received amnesties and two were sentenced to prison terms. On 24 February 2014 the Moscow Zamoskvoretskiy Court sentenced Aleksey Polikhovich, Stepan Zimin and Denis Lutskevich to three-and-a-half years, Sergey Krivov to four years and Yaroslav Belousov to two-and-a-half years in prison. Artiom Saviolov got two years and seven months in prison. Aleksandra Duhanina (Naumova) received a suspended sentence of three years and three months, while Andrey Barabanov received three years and seven months.

The criminal prosecution of peaceful participants in the Bolotnaya Square protest is part of a wider clampdown on freedoms of assembly, association and expression since Vladimir Putin resumed the Russian presidency on 7 May 2012.

Names: Artiom Saviolov, Denis Lutskevich, Yaroslav Belousov, Sergey Krivov, Stepan Zimin, Aleksey Polikhovich, Aleksandra Dukhanina (Naumova), Andrey Barabanov
Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 46/14 Index: EUR 46/039/2014 Issue Date: 17 June 2014