

Rectors of 200 Russian universities declare support for the war in Ukraine

Friday 18 March 2022, by [GOGOTSI Yuri](#) (Date first published: 12 March 2022).

Some 200 rectors (presidents) of Russian universities, led by Professor Viktor Sadovnichy, Rector of Moscow State University, have signed a letter that justifies, approves and encourages the war in Ukraine.

This war already killed thousands of people, both Ukrainians and Russians, including hundreds of women and children. I receive heart-breaking pictures and videos of destruction and dead bodies from my Ukrainian friends and colleagues every day. How could Sadovnichy, a well-known mathematician and public intellectual in Russia become an accomplice in mass murder?

He is certainly smart enough not to believe propaganda. He may be a coward, but no immediate imprisonment is likely for a person standing so high in the Russian hierarchy.

Did he betray thousands of Russian scientists and students who demonstrated and signed petitions against the war in Ukraine, and tens of thousands who silently oppose the war, just to keep his job, after already 30 years as Rector?

I don't know how he can live with his hands covered in blood. If he had signed this letter as an individual, it would only be a tragedy of a single man. However, as the Rector, he signed it on behalf of Moscow State University, and as the Chair of the Russian Rectors Union, he pushed about 200 other rectors to sign this letter. Instead of speaking against the war, behaving like a true leader (and a decent person) and saving his own country from making another step towards Stalinism and becoming a scientific pariah, he pushed the entire Russian academia to share responsibility for death of thousands of people, innocent Ukrainian civilians and Russian soldiers.

This letter should open the eyes of those who were supportive of continued scientific collaboration with Russian institutions, in spite of the war. I expect dire consequences for Russian science, betrayed by its academic leaders. This is a tragedy of international proportions.

Please repost and bring [this letter of Rectors](#), which expresses the official position of Russian academic leaders, to the attention of researchers in academic institutions around the world. They should be informed and act accordingly.

We often write about science heroes, but the scientific world should also know its villains.

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