

# Repression of Russian Socialists Condemned in Sri Lanka

Sunday 2 December 2012, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 29 November 2012).

A petition to the Russian Ambassador in Colombo, demanding that the Moscow authorities end the ongoing intimidation, harassment and imprisonment of almost 20 Russian pro-democracy socialist activists, was presented on 29 November.

Leaders of opposition political parties, Leftists, trade unionists and human rights activists in Sri Lanka have joined an international campaign to highlight the political repression unleashed by the Vladimir Putin regime against leaders of the mass movement for democracy in Russia, especially since 6 May 2012.

Dr. Vickramabahu Karunarathne of the Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) that backs the campaign here, explained that the Russian administration has been a staunch supporter of the Mahinda Rajapakse government in various international fora, including to cover up for its own human rights abuses in Chechnya.

*"The solidarity among dictators and oppressors should be countered by solidarity among pro-democracy forces in both countries. The criminalization of the rights to freedom of assembly, association and expression in Russia – and the use of the legal system to harass, intimidate and imprison Left activists – must stop now."*

Signatories to the petition include Tamil National Alliance (TNA) parliamentary leader R. Sampanthan; Democratic Peoples' Front (DPF) leader Mano Ganesan; Frontline Socialist Party politbureau member Pubudu Jayagoda; SK Senthivel, general secretary of the New Democratic Marxist-Leninist Party; Co-convenor of Lawyers for Democracy (LfD) Chandrapala Kumarage; Health Services Trade Union Alliance (HSTUA) president Saman Ratnapriya; Ceylon Teachers Union (CTU) general secretary Joseph Stalin Fernando; Linus Jayatilleka of the United Federation of Labour (UFL); and Federation of Media Employees' Trade Unions (FMETU) convenor Dharmasiri Lankapeli, among others.

In their joint letter to the Russian Ambassador, the signatories have expressed their concern for the physical and psychological safety of Alexandra Dukhanina; Vladmir Akimenkov; Michael Kosenko, Stepan Zimin; Nicolai Kavkazskii; Sergei Krivov; Sergei Udaltsov; Konstantin Lebedev; Leonid Razvozhaev; Aleksei Sutug; Aleksei Olesinov; Igor Harchenko; Irina Lipskaya; Alen Volikov and Filipp Dolbunov.

The petition demands the immediate release and for all charges to be dropped against those unjustly imprisoned; following reports of abduction, torture, forced confessions and use of the media to spread disinformation and hate about them, their organizations, and their political activities.

"We remind the Russian Federation of its obligations and responsibilities as a member of the Security Council of the United Nations and as state party to international human rights treaties and conventions, to respect the rights of its citizens including those who stand for democracy and anti-bureaucratic socialism.

We look forward to receiving public assurances of the safety of the detained activists and their immediate release, and will be monitoring their treatment, and respect for their rights and freedoms".

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