

# End the Terror Against Social Activists in Russia!

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### Public Statement on the Attacks against Social Activists

Recently, criminal attacks against the leaders of trade union and social movements have clearly increased. Among the latest such incidents, we should note the attacks against Carine Clément, a member of the working group and a leader of the Union of Coordinating Councils; Alexei Etmanov, leader of the labor union at Ford-Vsevolozhsk; Mikhail Beketov, leader of the movement to defend the Khimki Forest; and Sergei Fedotov, leader of the deceived land shareholders of the Moscow Region. In addition, a great many activists fighting the infill construction that is happening in all our cities have been attacked. There have been murders, in particular, of antifascist activists.

This is not a random phenomenon, but a clear trend: active citizens who try to restore justice and defend their legal rights are more and more often subjected to brute force. With no other arguments at its disposal, the opposite resorts to criminal methods. While it is clear that in each situation it is a different group of people who commissions these crimes, the overall tendency demonstrates that excellent conditions for the further escalation of this brutal method of "social dialogue" have been created in Russia today. These conditions include lawlessness, the lack of criminal liability for violations of the law by state officials or members of the ruling elite, universal corruption, and the hypercentralization of authority in the absence of any form of control from below. Many cases of "political" attacks on activists have still not been investigated, and the guilty parties not be found, which gives the assailants a sense of impunity and thus provokes further crimes.

We say, Enough!

We demand a maximally thorough and swift investigation of all assaults against all social activists, the transfer of these cases into a separate category, and the creation of a special investigative group within the Ministry of the Interior. We also demand that the public be kept informed about the course of these investigations.

We demand that the assailants be punished according to law whatever high-ranking patrons might support them.

We declare that we will not be intimidated by the method of violence and terror. We will continue our struggle for the social rights of our country's citizens.

We appeal to the state authorities, who position themselves as the guarantee of "public order," to make sure that "public order" is not violated by government officials. As it is, all we observe now is the arrests of old women and young activists at various assemblies, demonstrations or strikes, while we hear very little about arrests of corrupt state officials or unscrupulous employers. Down with this politics of double standards!

We declare that, given the situation, we consider it our right to use methods of

self-defense and that we will use all possible means to assist and protect our comrades.

## **14 November 2008**

*Union of Coordinating Councils of Russia (SKS): Izhevsk, Perm, Tiumen, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Novosibirsk, Krasnoobsk, Nizhny Novgorod, Omsk, Astrakhan, Kurgan, Moscow Region, Surgut, Kaliningrad, Saratov, Samara, Penza, etc. (There are twenty-seven regional coordinating councils in all.)*

This statement has been supported (as of November 17) by the following organizations:

*Left Front*

*Vpered Socialist Movement*

*Defense of Labor Trade Union Alliance*

*Saratov People's Housing Forum*

*The Anarchists of Sergiev Posad*

*The Locals of Defense, the United Workers Union of Kurgan*

*Workers Democracy*

*The Novosibirsk Branch of AKM (Avant-Garde of the Red Youth)*

*The Federation of Russian Trade Unions*

*The Russian Federation of Air Traffic Controllers*

*The Civic Initiatives Movement (Saint Petersburg)*

*The Siberian Labor Confederation*

*The Tselinnoe Branch of the CPRF; the Tselinnoe Branch of the Russian Federation Communist Youth League; the Tselinnoe Branch of Russia's Hope, the All-Russia Women's Union (Altai Krai)*

*The Zalesovo Branch of the CPRF; the Zalesovo Branch of the Communist Youth League; the Zalesovo Branch of the Peasants Front*

*Union of Social Organizations of the Residents of Strogino (Moscow)*

*The Sparrow Hills Committee for Local Social Self-Government*

*Revolutionary Front (Zagorsk)*

*The Movement to Defend the Khimki Forest (Khimki, Moscow Oblast)*

*The Collective of the Internet Portal Dvizh.org (The Movement)*

*The Udmurtia Civic Actions Coordinating Council; the Movement of House Committees of Izhevsk; the Udmurtia Republic Public Council of Pensioners V.V. Suchkov, the chair of Our Own Home, an association of home owner societies (Sochi); the Center for the Defense of Constitutional Rights and Freedoms of Citizens (Sochi)*

*The Altai Branch of the AKM*

*SoDeistvie (Assistance)*

*The Penza Branch of For Human Rights; the Penza Municipal Ecology Club; the Penza Oblast Working Group of the Russian Section of the ISHR; the Penza Regional Branch of the Union for Chemical Safety*

*The Anti-Fascist Union*

*Our City (Kaliningrad)*

*The Leningrad Organization of the AKM (Saint Petersburg)*

*Liberty, the Samara Civil Rights Information Agency (Alexander Lashmankin, Leonid Chuchman)*

*Revolutionary Workers Party*

*Dormitories Movement of Moscow and Moscow Oblast*

*Left Front-Komi*

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We ask all networks, movements, and initiative groups to support our appeal.  
You may send your collective or individual signature to: [info@ikd.ru](mailto:info@ikd.ru)