



Stand with Perm Memorial – Protect the Memory!

Joint statement by the Solidarity Group and the “Historical Memory and Education” Working Group of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum

We, the Solidarity Group and the “Historical Memory and Education” Working Group of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum, are deeply concerned by the ongoing persecution of the Perm branch of the International Historical, Enlightenment, Charity, and Human Rights Society "Memorial" and call on everyone, who care about the fate of civil society in Russia's regions to express their solidarity.

The developments started this summer and culminated in the last days, when officials from the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), the Centre for Combatting Extremism (the E Centre) and the police carried out searches in Perm Memorial's office and the apartment of the branch's head, Robert Latypov. Later, on 9 November, journalists from the TV channel "REN TV" burst into the organisation's office and demanded comments on “accusations of paedophilia”.

In August 2019, with assistance of Perm Memorial, an international search expedition was organised to the village of Galyashor in the Kudymkarsky district of Perm Krai. The volunteers from Lithuania, Italy and Russia worked together to clean up the area around a memorial sign in the local cemetery in memory of special settlers from Lithuania and Poland, who were deported to Galyashor between 1940 and 1950. Among the participants were also relatives of repressed victims of Stalinist terror. During the expedition, police officers came to the camp and claimed that the participants were illegally occupying the territory and allegedly felling trees¹. Later, the police opened two criminal cases on “Illegal Tree Felling” and “Fictive Registration of a Foreign Citizen” (art. 260 and 322 of the Criminal Code, respectively). Additionally, they fined Perm Memorial a total of 200 000 rubles (approx. 2840€) and its leader Robert Latypov a total of 50 000 rubles (approx. 710€) for “Unauthorised Occupation of Forest Land” (art. 7.9. of the Code of Administrative Offences). The Lithuanian volunteers also had fees imposed on them.²

Perm Memorial was founded in 1988 and today brings together 2000 activists who lead vital work to commemorate victims of political repression during the Soviet period by erecting memory signs in places where victims of Stalinist terror are buried, coordinating a volunteer service to provide assistance to people in need, as well as many other projects on historical memory.

We stand in solidarity with Perm Memorial and call on media and civil society organisations to support this statement and contribute to its wide distribution. We urge citizens of Russia and the European Union to express their personal solidarity with the colleagues in Perm:

- Sign and share [the petition: “Stop the Persecution of Perm Memorial”](#)
- Make public statements and publish personal appeals in support of Perm Memorial
- Publish support banners and stickers on your personal pages in social media

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¹ See <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4065606> (in Russian)

² See <https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2019/11/01/82594-eto-aktsiya-ustrasheniya-chtoby-paralizovat-deyatelnost-organizatsii> (in Russian)

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The EU-Russia Civil Society Forum was established in 2011 by non-governmental organisations as a permanent common platform. At the moment, 180 NGOs from Russia and the European Union are members or supporters of the Forum. It aims at development of cooperation of civil society organisations from Russia and EU and greater participation of NGOs in the EU-Russia dialogue. The Forum has been actively involved, inter alia, in the questions of facilitation of visa regime, development of civic participation, protection of the environment and human rights, dealing with history and civic education.