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Russia Solidarity: First responses to solidarity appeal

Tuesday 4 December 2012, by [DUGGAN Penelope](#) (Date first published: 3 December 2012).

Following the appeal by the Russian left - Russian Socialist Movement (RSD), Autonomous Action, Left Front - for solidarity action between November 29th and December 2nd, with international endorsements [1], *International Viewpoint* correspondents have sent reports of the actions in their countries.

Paris, France, Monday 3rd of December

In the context of an international week of protests against repression in Russia which is hitting dozens of political and social activists a delegation composed of Arlette Laguiller (LO), Olivier Besancenot (NPA) and Martine Billard (PG) representing LO (Lutte ouvrière, Workers Struggle), PG (Parti de Gauche, Left Party), NPA (Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste, New Anti-capitalist Party) the Alternatifs (the Alternatives), the Communist Party (PCF), the FASE (Fédération pour une Alternative Sociale et Écologique, Federation for a Socialist and Ecological Alternative) and EELV (Europe écologie-Les Verts, Europe Ecology-the Greens), was received today at 2pm for almost forty minutes by two representatives of the Russian embassy, including Mr Léonide Kadychev, minister and advisor to the Paris embassy.

During the interview the representatives of the Russian embassy explained that they could not give any information about the prisoners because they were the responsibility of the judicial system but the very badly-informed French delegation would be welcome in Russia to see for itself. The French delegation for its part undertook to continue its campaign against the repressive laws in Russia and for the release of all the imprisoned democrats.

Press statement by the NPA. Translation by *International Viewpoint*.

Milan, Italy, Monday 3rd of December, 2012

In Milan a symbolic “flash mob” took place under the flag of Russian Federation located in the center of the city in preparation of “Expo2015”. Comrades from Sinistra Critica chained their hands and gagged their mouths to protest against the condition of Russian prisoners, distributing flyers in Italian and English — and wearing signs such as “Stop political repression in Russia”, “No more impunity for authorities”, “Freedom for arrested for the events in the Bolotnava square”, “Freedom

for all political prisoners”.

Colombo, Sri Lanka, Thursday 29th of November, 2012

A delegation led by Dr Vickramabahu Karunathne of the Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) handed in a letter of protest to the Russian Embassy. The letter was signed by representatives of opposition political parties, leftists, trade-unionist and human rights activists.

These included the Tamil National Alliance, Democratic People's Front, New Democratic Party-Marxist Leninist, Frontline Socialist Party, Lawyers for Democracy, Health Services Trade Union Alliance, Ceylon Teachers' Union, United Federation of Labour, Federation of Media Employees' Trade Unions, Commercial and Industrial Workers' Union, Committee for the Investigation of the Disappeared, Movement for the Release of Political Prisoners, Young Lawyers.

London, Britain, Thursday 29th of November 2012

A lively protest was held at the Russian embassy in London last night (Thursday) to demand the release of democratic and left activists currently in Russian gaols, and an end to state repression. In attendance were Russian human rights campaigners from the group Speak Up! and student supporters of Pussy Riot from Goldsmiths college, as well as members of Socialist Resistance and Counterfire.

Chants, in English and Russian, included: 'Free the political prisoners!', 'Free Pussy Riot!', 'Russia without Putin!' (it sounds better in Russian). Protestors were informed that the picket was backed by film director Ken Loach and Labour MP John McDonnell, among others.

In his message of support for Vladimir Akimenkov, Michael Kosenko, Stepan Zimin and Nikolai Kavkazskii Ken Loach said:

“The continued oppressive treatment of dissidents makes a mockery of the pretence that Putin's Russia is a tolerant and democratic country. I support the call for the immediate release of those imprisoned for political engagement. The true patriots are those who fight to end injustice and oppression in their homeland.”

From **Socialist Resistance**.

Frankfurt, Germany, Friday 30th of November, 2012

Demonstrators picketed the Russian consulate-general in Frankfurt giving out leaflets to passers by and to those going in and out of the Consulate General. Despite a police presence they were able to continue their action.

They handed in a letter of protest - an abridged version of the Russian call for solidarity - to the consul-general's deputy.

There will be a protest in Berlin on Thursday 6th of December.

Geneva, Switzerland, Friday 30th of November 2012

There was a protest action outside Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation before the United Nations in Geneva. It was a first step, and it was decided to prepare follow-up events in the next future.

Brussels, Belgium, Saturday 27th of October

On Saturday the 27th of October, the Young Anti-Capitalists (JAC, Jeunesse Anti-capitaliste) repounded to the call from comrades in Russia and held a symbolic picket outside the embassy of the Russian Federation. They were showing their support for Konstantin Lebedev, imprisoned since the 17th of October and Léonid Razvojaev, kidnapped the same day then imprisoned and tortured, for Sergueï Oudaltsov, whose freedom is seriously threatened and well as for all the political prisoners from the "6th of May events".

Penelope Duggan

P.S.

* <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org>

Footnotes

[1] See on ESSF (article 27157), [Free Russian political prisoners !](#) & (article 26885), [A call to join the international days of solidarity against political repression in Russia.](#)