

URGENT ACTION

WHISTLE BLOWER DETAINED ON SPURIOUS CHARGES

Aleksandr Eivazov, a former court secretary, is unjustly detained on charges of interfering with the course of justice after he exposed violations in the judicial system. His health is at risk and he should be immediately released.

Aleksandr Eivazov, 22 years-old, started working as a court secretary in October 2016, in the October District court in St Petersburg, hoping to become a judge one day. He was shocked by the violations of judicial ethics and labour rights that he witnessed in the court, such as secretaries being asked to falsify records of court sessions and judges violating the principle of judicial independence by not conducting their deliberations in secret. Aleksandr Eivazov sent dozens of complaints to the chairs of higher courts, the judicial qualification body, the Federal Security Service and the Investigative Committee, and when he received no response he published his criticism on social media and sent information to journalists. He resigned in December 2016. Following his resignation, he was visited at his home in January 2017 by the Deputy Chair of the October District court accompanied by police officers and he was asked to sign a backdated record of a court session that had been prepared by another secretary, which he refused to do. Shortly afterwards, the Chair of the court asked the Investigative Committee to instigate a case against him for interfering in the work of the court claiming that Aleksandr Eivazov had failed to prepare and sign court records. Aleksandr Eivazov was detained on 22 August in Sochi, in the southwest of Russia, and is currently in pre-trial detention in St Petersburg. He has suffered from asthma since childhood and is not receiving the drugs that he requires nor adequate treatment for his condition. The poor conditions of detention and particularly the conditions during transportation between the court room and the detention centre have exacerbated his condition.

Aleksandr Eivazov is prisoner of conscience who is being prosecuted for the exercise of his right to freedom of expression and he should be immediately released.

Please write immediately in Russian, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to release Aleksandr Eivazov immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for the exercise of his right to freedom of expression;
- Pending his release, calling on them to ensure that he is provided with access to any medical care he may require, including the medication he needs to treat his asthma.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 NOVEMBER 2017 TO:

Prosecutor of Saint Petersburg

Sergei Litvinenko
Saint Petersburg Prosecutor's Office
ul. Pochtamskaya 2/9
190000 Saint Petersburg, Russia
Fax: +7 812 315 4853/ 3182649
Email: e-mail via website
<http://procppb.ru/reception>
Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

Head

Pre-trial Detention Centre No.1
Arsenalnaya nab. d. 7
195009, Saint Petersburg
Russia
Fax: +7 812 294 59 49
Email: kresty-sizo@mail.ru
Salutation: Dear Head

And copies to:

Head of Federal Penitentiary Service of
St Petersburg and Leningrad Region
Igor Potapenko
Arsenalnaya Nab. d. 7
195009 Saint Petersburg, Russia
Fax: +7 812 272 8331
Email: ufsin.spb@78.fsin.su

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR ALEXANDER VLADIMIROVICH YAKOVENKO, Embassy of Russia, 6-7 Kensington Palace Gardens, London, W8 4QP, 020 7229 6412

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The failings of the judicial system in Russia are well known. According to a poll carried out by the social research organization Levada-Centre in 2016, of all public institutions in Russia, the court system has the lowest level of trust compared to the president, the Orthodox Church, security apparatus, army, government and parliament.

In 2014, the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of the judiciary expressed “strong concern about allegations of direct and indirect threats to, and improper influence, interference and pressure on the judiciary”, and expressed the view that this was a serious threat to the rule of law in the Russian Federation.

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