

URGENT ACTION

MIKHAIL TSAKUNOV RELEASED, TRIAL ONGOING

Prisoner of conscience Mikhail Tsakunov was released under travel restrictions on 26 April after spending almost a year in pre-trial detention. He was arrested in May 2018 and charged with violence against a police officer for his peaceful participation in an opposition rally. The criminal proceedings against him are ongoing and he is still facing up to five years in prison if convicted.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

Mikhail Tsakunov was released under travel restrictions on 26 April after spending nearly a year in pre-trial detention. Riot police arrested him on 5 May 2018 in central Saint Petersburg, while he was peacefully attending a protest against Vladimir Putin's re-election as president and was accused of hitting a police officer in the face and knocking out a tooth. He was initially charged under Art. 318(2) of the Criminal Code of Russia, "violence against a representative of authorities threatening their life or health", which bears a maximum sentence of ten years in prison.

[Video footage](#) of the arrest and additional available evidence contradicted the riot police's claims and confirmed Mikhail Tsakunov was a prisoner of conscience prosecuted solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and assembly and that he needed to be immediately and unconditionally released. Moreover, the footage raised serious questions regarding the actions of the riot police and their use of force during the protest.

We believe that the public campaign on behalf of Mikhail Tsakunov including appeals sent by Amnesty International members contributed to ensuring his release from pre-trial detention. While it is a positive development, together with the lessening of the charges against him, he should have never been arrested or imprisoned for protesting peacefully in the first place. The criminal proceedings against him are still ongoing, and he may still face up to five years in prison if convicted.

We will continue monitoring the ongoing trial, insist that all charges against him be dropped and renew our public campaigning if he is deprived of his freedom again.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Mikhail Tsakunov (he/him)

THIS IS THE FIRST AND FINAL UPDATE FOR UA 90/18

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR46/8381/2018/en/>

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