



Statement on serious human rights violations in Russia

Delivered by Counsellor Marit H. Lillealtern at the Permanent Council
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Mr Chair,

Norway is deeply concerned about the continued and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Russia, as documented i.a. by the recent report under the Moscow mechanism, by free media and civil society in and outside the country. This increasing internal oppression paved the way for and accompanies Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

The use of repressive legislation as well as prosecution and imprisonment of human rights defenders, opposition figures, anti-war protesters and other critics continue. The number of politically motivated trials and political prisoners in the country is worrying.

This week, the prominent human rights defender and co-chair of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Memorial, Oleg Orlov, was charged with discreditation of the Russian Armed Forces for simply exercising his right to freedom of expression. We call on Russian authorities to drop the criminal charges against Mr. Orlov. We further call for immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners in Russia, including Vladimir Kara-Murza, Aleksei Navalny, Ilya Yashin and Aleksandra Skochilenko.

This week, we also witnessed a brutal and violent attack on the renowned Russian journalist of Novaya Gazeta, Elena Milashina, and human rights lawyer Alexander Nemov in Chechnya. They were on their way to attend the court hearing against Zarema Musaeva, later sentenced to 5,5 years in a prison colony on politically motivated charges. The attack on Ms. Milashina and Mr. Nemov is deeply alarming and illustrates the intimidating and hostile environment for journalists, lawyers, and human rights defenders in the country.

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We welcome the statement of the Representative on Freedom of the Media strongly condemning the attack and calling for a thorough investigation. We expect Russian authorities to do everything in their power to bring those responsible to justice.

As OSCE participating States, we have confirmed time and time again that protecting fundamental rights and freedoms is a priority and inexplicably linked to stability and security in the region. We have also agreed that commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned.

Let me therefore conclude with what we have stated many times before: Russia must live up to its OSCE commitments and other international human rights obligations.

Thank you.