

URGENT ACTION

FEAR FOR SAFETY OF “MISSING” PUSSY RIOT MEMBER

Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, imprisoned member of punk group Pussy Riot was reportedly put into a car on the 22 October, apparently to be transferred to another penal colony. Her whereabouts remain unknown. There are serious concerns regarding her safety and wellbeing.

Russian law only obliges the penal service authorities to notify one of a prisoner's family members as to his or her whereabouts within ten days following the prisoner's arrival at a new penal colony. However, there are no legal limitations as to how long a prisoner can be in transit. One of **Nadezhda Tolokonnikova's** lawyers has told Amnesty International that the penal service authorities may be deliberately “making her life difficult” by keeping her in transit. The lengthy transit could be a means of pressure and *de facto* punishment for her recent open letter criticizing the penal administration and for her subsequent hunger strike.

Considering the most recent episodes of pressure and intimidation Nadezhda Tolokonnikova has allegedly been subjected to by officials at her previous penal colony, her family and lawyers are very concerned that she may be at risk of further intimidation and threats. It was reported that on the evening of 22 October Nadezhda Tolokonnikova was put into a car and taken to another prison colony, allegedly in the Chuvash town of Alaty. However, it was later reported that she could be in a detention centre in the Urals city of Chelyabinsk. Following this information, members of the local public prison monitoring commission tried to confirm her whereabouts and visit her, but the regional penal service authorities refused to confirm if Nadezhda Tolokonnikova was being held in the territory or the region or to offer any details of her whereabouts.

Please write immediately in Russian or your own language:

- Expressing concern about Nadezhda Tolokonnikova's safety and urging the Russian Penal Service to disclose her whereabouts to her family;
- Expressing concern that Nadezhda Tolokonnikova is a prisoner of conscience deprived of freedom solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression and that she must be released immediately and unconditionally;
- Calling on the Russian authorities to ensure Nadezhda Tolokonnikova's safety while in transit and at her new place of detention

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 16 DECEMBER 2013 TO:

Director of the Federal Service of

Execution of Punishments

Gennadii Aleksandrovich Kornienko

Federal Service of Execution of

Punishments, ul. Zhitnaya 14, GSP-1

119991 Moscow, Russian Federation

Fax: +7 495 982 1950; +7 495 982 1930

Email: udmail@fsin.su

Salutation: Dear Director

Prosecutor General of the Russian

Federation

Yurii Yakovlevich Chaika

Prosecutor General's Office

ul. B. Dmitrovka, d.15a

125993 Moscow GSP- 3

Russian Federation

Fax: +7 495 987 58 41 ; +7 495 692 17

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Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 23 September Nadezhda Tolokonnikova declared a hunger strike in protest against “slave labour conditions” and degrading treatment of the inmates in the penal colony where she was serving her sentence.

She published an open letter describing the situation and demanding that the penal colony authorities act in accordance with legislation and treat the inmates with dignity. At the same time Nadezhda Tolokonnikova complained to the Investigation Committee that she had received a death threat from the deputy director who had allegedly said: “As for you, you will definitely not suffer anymore. Nobody suffers in the afterlife.” Nadezhda Tolokonnikova requested that her complaint be investigated. She also demanded that she be transferred to another penal colony.

Soon afterwards she was transferred to solitary confinement (punishment cell). The prison authorities explained that it had been done “for her own safety”. Following Nadezhda Tolokonnikova’s letter, Presidential Council for Human Rights sent four of its members to visit the penal colony, talk with Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and other inmates, and investigate the allegations. The Presidential Council’s Working Group established that, indeed, inmates work 12-16 hours a day seven days a week; which is a violation of Russia’s Labour Code. The group also established that inmates work without contracts, their salary is much lower than the minimum wage, as well as other violations of employment law. Further to this, the Group established that inmates are not allowed to complain and those who do complain are punished. In addition, contrary to Russian legislation, there is an informal system of punishments imposed on inmates via other inmates.

However, in terms of Nadezhda Tolokonnikova’s hunger strike, the Working Group came to the conclusion that it might have been pre-planned, organized and staged from the outside. The Group came to this conclusion based on the report of one of the prison security officers who monitors phone calls. The Group’s report also cited counter allegations of the deputy director of the penal colony, who said he was blackmailed by Nadezhda Tolokonnikova’s husband and her lawyer. According to the penal colony official, they had tried to persuade him that Nadezhda Tolokonnikova be transferred to light duties or she would start a hunger strike and they would submit a complaint that he had issued death threats against her.

Nadezhda Tolokonnikova was transferred back to the penal colony on 17 October, after spending several days in a prison hospital. The next day, she declared that she was restarting her hunger strike because her demands to transfer her to another penal colony and to open an investigation into alleged threats by the prison colony’s deputy director had not been satisfied.

Name: Nadezhda Tolokonnikova

Gender m/f: f

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