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## **Russian Federation: Intimidatory raid on Glasnost Foundation**

*The special police raid on the premises of the Glasnost Foundation in Moscow was an intimidatory act carried out with disproportionate use of force, Amnesty International said today.*

*The raid was conducted on the evening of 29 August by masked law enforcement officers. Staff and visitors of the human rights organization were ordered at gunpoint to lie face-down on the floor. Some of them were kicked and sworn at. Sergey Grigoryants, a veteran human rights activist, reported being kicked in the head and back for not lying down quickly enough.*

*"The ill-treatment of those present in the Glasnost Foundation may amount to cruel or degrading treatment, in breach of the Russian Federation's obligations under international law," Amnesty International said.*

*The organization also expressed concern that the human rights activists may have been arbitrarily detained in breach of the Russian Federation's obligations under Article 5 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.*

*"This unacceptable incident must be promptly investigated in a thorough and impartial manner," Amnesty International said, adding that any officers reasonably suspected of human rights violations should be brought to justice.*

### **Background**

According to information received by Amnesty International, seven or eight officers broke down the back door of the Glasnost Foundation's Moscow office shortly after 7pm on 29 August. All except one of the officers wore masks and were dressed in camouflage uniforms, armed with automatic weapons and pistols. They were led by an officer without a mask, who has been identified as a lieutenant of the 18th Moscow police precinct. Immediately prior to the raid this officer had presented himself at the front door, but Glasnost Foundation Chairman Sergey Grigoryants had not admitted him, as the officer reportedly identified himself incorrectly and failed to produce a search warrant.

All the people present in the office at the time of the raid -- numbering about 12 and including a 10-year-old girl -- were kept lying on the floor for about 30 minutes. The police lieutenant stated that he and his colleagues were conducting a check on the identity documents of everyone in the foundation's office. However, they reportedly did not check the documents of all the activists.

Sergey Grigoryants is a human rights activist and former dissident, who was adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International during the pre-glasnost years of the Soviet Union.

Among its activities the Glasnost Foundation conducts an annual conference entitled: "The KGB: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow". On the evening of the raid the foundation staff and visitors were planning the ninth such conference, scheduled for late October or early November, together with other events such as a human rights defenders' conference.

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For more information, or to obtain a copy of Amnesty International's paper "Russian Federation: Raid on the Glasnost Foundation by soecial police", please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

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