



Amnesty International Appeal Case - Russian Federation

Grigory Pasko

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate release of the journalist.

Grigory Pasko, a reporter for *Boyevaya Vakhta* (Battle Watch), the newspaper of the Russian Pacific Fleet, has been found guilty of treason. On 25 December 2001 the Military Court of the Pacific Fleet sentenced him to four years'

imprisonment in a hard labour camp for intent to pass on information to a foreign correspondent.

Amnesty International strongly believes that Grigory Pasko was solely exercising his right to freedom of expression as guaranteed in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Amnesty International has adopted him as a prisoner of conscience.



Background information

In 1993 Grigory Pasko filmed a Russian navy tanker dumping radioactive waste in the Sea of Japan. The film, *Extra-dangerous Zone*, was later shown by the Japanese TV station *Nippon Hoso Kyokai* (NHK), Japan Broadcasting Corporation, and by a TV station in Primorsky region, in far eastern Russia. In this film and in further articles he exposed the threats to the environment caused by the Pacific Fleet. According to Russian laws information about ecological threats should not be withheld from the public.

Grigory Pasko also reported on corruption inside the fleet and he passed on public information on both of the above mentioned issues to Japanese journalists. In November 1997, on his return from Japan, he was arrested and accused of espionage and treason. After 20 months in pre-trial detention he was sentenced in July 1999 to three years' imprisonment for abuse of his position but was immediately released under an amnesty.

Both Grigory Pasko and the Military Prosecutor of the Pacific Fleet appealed against the conviction, Grigory Pasko asking for an acquittal while the prosecutor considered the sentence too lenient. In November 2000 the Russian Supreme Court decided to return the case to the Military Court in Vladivostok for further investigation.

After numerous delays the second trial started in July 2001, and in December 2001 Grigory Pasko was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in a labour camp. His previous imprisonment while awaiting trial was taken into account and he therefore faces two years and four months in detention. Again both sides appealed against the verdict. Until a decision about the appeals has been taken, Grigory Pasko remains in pre-trial detention.

Recommended action:

Please send politely worded letters - in Russian or English or your own language.

- Stating that Grigory Pasko is imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression, and that he acted in full accordance with Russian law;
- urging for the immediate and unconditional release of Grigory Pasko;
- asking for a the court decision to be overturned, as Grigory Pasko has not committed an offence.

Whom to write to:

President of the Russian Federation
Vladimir Putin
The Kremlin
Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 095 206 6277, +7 095 206 8510

Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation
Vladimir Ustinov
Ul. Bolshaya Dimitrovka, d. 15 a
Moscow K 31
103793
Russian Federation
Fax: + 7 095 292 88 48

Supreme Court of the Russian Federation
Military Collegium
Ul. Povarskaya 15
Moscow
121069
Russian Federation
Fax: +7 095 206 07 66

Please send copies of your letters to the following human rights organizations in Russia

Glasnost Defence Foundation Fax: 007 095 201 4947, e-mail: maria@gdf.ru
Index on Censorship: edit@index.org.ru

and to the Russian embassy in your country.

Please send letters of support to

Grigory Pasko
SIZO IZ-25/1
Partizanskiy Prospekt 28-b
690106 Vladivostok
Russian Federation