

**PUBLIC**

**AI Index: EUR 46/028/2003**

**10 October 2003**

**Further Information on EXTRA 39/03 (EUR 46/069/2003, 12 August 2003) and follow-ups (EUR 46/072/2003, 27 August 2003 and EUR 46/082/2003, 26 September 2003) - Freedom of Expression**

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION            "School of Peace", non-governmental minority rights organization**

---

On 6 October, the trial judge at Primorskii District Court in Novorossiysk, Krasnodar Territory, suspended the hearing into the closure of the non-governmental organization (NGO) "School of Peace", for several months.

The "School of Peace" had been under considerable pressure from authorities in the Krasnodar Territory of Russia to stop its campaigning on behalf of the Meskhetian minority, thousands of whom live in the Territory. In July 2003, the Krasnodar Ministry of Justice called for the closure of the NGO because it no longer employed its three founding members, as required by law. The "School of Peace" subsequently applied to have its Statutes changed to allow for the introduction of new members. On 2 October, this application was rejected, though the NGO is currently appealing against this decision. The trial judge in the hearing into the closure of "School of Peace" has therefore decided to suspend proceedings, whilst awaiting the outcome of the appeal.

According to the country team at Amnesty International, previous appeals and wider international pressure has temporarily averted the closure of the "School of Peace". The situation however, will be closely monitored and appropriate campaigning will be carried out as necessary.

**Many thanks to all those who sent appeals. No further action is requested at present.**