

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Media Advisory

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Russian Federation: Amnesty International launches annual report Media invite

On 23 May, Amnesty International launches its report on the state of the world's human rights. The Amnesty International Report 2006, covering 150 countries, documents human rights issues of concern to Amnesty International during 2005 and reflects the organization's activities during the year to promote human rights and to campaign against specific human rights abuses.

This year's launch of Amnesty International's annual report is on the eve of the European Union - Russian Federation summit. It comes days after the Russian Federation has assumed the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and after it has been elected onto the new UN Human Rights Council.

At a press conference in Moscow, Amnesty International will focus on the organization's concerns in Europe and in the Russian Federation in particular.

When: Tuesday 23 May 2006 at 13:00 Moscow time (09:00 GMT)

Where: Independent press centre
Tverskoi bul'var, dom 20

Who: Nicola Duckworth, Amnesty International's Europe and Central Asia Programme Director
Sergei Nikitin, Amnesty International's Russia Resource Centre Director
Valerii Levonevskii and Alexander Vasiliev, former prisoners of conscience from Belarus.

They were imprisoned for the distribution of a leaflet calling on people to take part in 1 May demonstrations in 2004 and to protest against President Alyaksandr Lukashenka going on holiday skiing in Austria at taxpayers' expense.

Dick Oosting, Amnesty International's European Union (EU) Office Director will be available for telephone interviews in English and Dutch on the EU's role in safeguarding human rights with partner countries. You can arrange an interview on tel. (+ 32 2) 548 2773 or by e-mail: amnesty-eu@aieu.be.

"This year Russia has the unique opportunity to take significant steps to enhance the respect and protection of human rights at home, and to encourage such enhancement in the world. Russia must demonstrate to the international community a real commitment to human rights that is compatible with the country's place on the international stage and its standing in the world," Nicola Duckworth said.

"The EU cannot afford to have its largest neighbour undermining basic human rights, it has to seize this opportunity to urge President Putin to live up to Russia's international obligations," Dick Oosting said.

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Please note:

The report and media materials, including photos, audio and video, for the launch will be available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish at <http://www.amnesty.org/report2006/launchpack-eng>.
Video to accompany the report will be available on Beta SP for those who attend the press conference or otherwise via satellite feeds on the APTN Global Video Wire at the following times:

2200 - 2215 GMTon the 22nd May

0700 - 0715 GMTon the 23rd May

1215 - 1230 GMTon the 23rd May

Public Document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566
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