

URGENT ACTION

RUSSIAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER RELEASED

Russian human rights defender Aleksei Sokolov has been released on parole. His sentence for charges which he has always denied was imposed after a trial held with several reported violations of fair trial standards, and based on testimonies of prison inmates, some of whom had earlier complained of pressure to testify against him.

On 27 July, a court in Krasnoyarsk decided to release Aleksei Sokolov on parole. He was arrested in May 2009 and sentenced for theft and robbery in May 2010 on charges that many believed to have been fabricated in response to his human rights work in defence of prisoners' rights, including torture of prison inmates. The original five-year sentence was reduced to three on appeal. He served his term in Krasnoyarsk, over 2,000km away from his family, and was reportedly subjected to beating and harassment by prison administrations, including en route to Krasnoyarsk. He is now back home with his family in Yekaterinburg.

Alexei Sokolov has had two previous parole applications turned down on dubious pretexts.

Amnesty International spoke to Aleksei Sokolov, on 27 July. He said he was relieved to be able to go back to his wife and children. He thanked Amnesty International and its members as well as the many other human rights organizations that have supported him over the last two years.

Thanks to all of those who took action on behalf of Aleksei Sokolov. No further appeals from the network are required at present but Amnesty International will continue to monitor this case

This is the seventh update of UA 128/09. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR46/031/2010/en>

Name: Aleksei Sokolov
Gender m/f: male

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