

# URGENT ACTION

## RELEASE CONVICTED ANTI-WAR LOCAL POLITICIAN

The Russian authorities are putting the health and life of Aleksei Gorinov at risk due to his treatment and conditions in detention, including being held in prolonged solitary confinement, not receiving adequate healthcare and forcing him to clear snow despite being ill. He was sentenced to seven years imprisonment solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression and must be released immediately and unconditionally.

**TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER**

*Prosecutor General's Office  
Igor Viktorovich Krasnov  
Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation  
str. Bolshaya Dmitrovka, 15a, Moscow,  
Russian Federation, GSP-3, 125993*

*Dear Prosecutor General Igor Victorovich,*

*I am writing to express concern for **Aleksei Gorinov** (62), an opposition municipal deputy (councillor) in the Krasnoselsky District of Moscow. He is recognised as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International.*

*On 15 March 2022, he spoke at a municipal council's session calling for an end to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and stated that children were dying in the conflict every day. He was arrested on 26 April 2022 and charged with "disseminating knowingly false information about Russian Armed Forces," a newly instituted criminal offence under Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code. Aleksei Gorinov, who is currently in the prison hospital in Vladimir region, was the first person to receive a prison sentence (7 years long) for spreading "false information" about Russia's Armed Forces (Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code) simply for calling the "special military operation" in Ukraine – "a war" and stating that children are dying in it. An appeal hearing on 19 September 2023 upheld the conviction but reduced the sentence by one month.*

*On 5 December 2023, Russian human rights defenders reported that Aleksei Gorinov, who had just been transferred to Penal Colony No. 2 in Pokrov, was ill. He complained of respiratory problems, which were exacerbated by the fact that part of his lung had been removed several years ago. The lawyer who visited Aleksei Gorinov on 8 December 2023 described the prisoner's condition as "very bad" and noted that his skin was pale blue, he was exhausted and barely able to sit on the chair. Aleksei Gorinov, who is 62 years old, was transferred to a prison hospital in the city of Vladimir in December 2023, but his health remains in a serious condition.*

***I call on you to take all necessary steps to immediately and unconditionally release Aleksei Gorinov as he is detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression and to ensure, in the meantime, that he is able to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health. I further call on you to take all necessary steps to have Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation repealed, as it violates Russia's international human rights obligations.***

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

While in detention, Aleksei Gorinov has been repeatedly placed in SHIZO (penal cell) for alleged minor violations of prison rules. In detention, he fell ill due to respiratory problems, exacerbated by the fact that a part of his lung had been removed several years earlier. Prison authorities denied him adequate health care and instead forced him to clear snow outside.

On 9 December 2023, more than 240 health professionals sent an open letter to President Vladimir Putin raising concern over Aleksei Gorinov's health and calling for him to be provided with the necessary healthcare. Later in December, he was transferred to a prison hospital. According to OVD-Info, a Russian human rights watchdog, Aleksei Gorinov's health is still weak. According to them, he is not getting sufficient treatment, because Russian prison hospitals are poorly equipped.

On 13 September 2023, the Russian authorities opened a new investigation against Aleksei Gorinov accusing him of "justification of terrorism" for discussing an alleged Ukrainian attack on a bridge in Crimea, and the Azov Regiment of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (which has been designated as a "terrorist organization" in Russia).

Russia's war censorship laws, introduced in March 2022, criminalized criticism of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and of war crimes committed by Russian forces, as "fakes" and "discreditation" of the Russian Armed Forces (Articles 207.3 and 280.3 of the Criminal Code), carrying a maximum sentence of 15 years' imprisonment. The laws led to an exodus of independent media and activists from Russia and a crackdown on any form of anti-war dissent. Even calling the war "a war" instead of a "special military operation" can be considered a crime.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Russian, English

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 8 May 2024**

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Aleksei Gorinov (he/his/him)