

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



The Head of Division

Directorate: Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, Regional
Cooperation & OSCE
Division: Russia

Brussels, **23 SEP. 2014**
EEAS.III.B3/AD/id Ares(2014)

Dear signatories,

Thank you for your open letter of 25 August 2014 on behalf of representatives of the art world concerning Oleg Sentsov, an Ukrainian film director, script writer and producer, addressed to the President of the European Commission José Manuel Durão Barroso. He has asked me to answer on his behalf, as Head of the division responsible for the relations with the Russian Federation in the European External Action Service.

The European Union is well aware of the case of Mr Sentsov and his colleagues Alexander Kolchenko, Gennady Afanasev and Aleksei Chirny. The EEAS and the EU Delegations in Kiev and in Moscow have followed closely developments related to their case. On 29 May 2014, in the OSCE Permanent Council, the EU noted with concern the deteriorating human rights situation in Crimea since its illegal annexation by Russia. The EU stressed that the arrest of the Ukrainian film director and civil society activist Oleg Sentsov charged with terrorism in Simferopol on 11 May was a cause for concern. <http://www.osce.org/pc/120236?download=true>

The EU raised their cases directly with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 10 September, asked the Russian authorities to clarify the circumstances related to their arrests and questioned the competence of Russian Courts to judge on acts allegedly committed outside Russia. The EU also reiterated the priority it attaches to Russia respecting its international human rights commitments on freedom of assembly, expression and association. On 18 September, through a public statement, the EU stated once again its concerns with the disturbing human rights situation on the Crimean peninsula, called for full respect of all fundamental rights and freedoms in Crimea and reiterated that the EU does not recognise its illegal annexation by the Russian Federation. http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140918_01_en.pdf

The EEAS and the EU Delegation in Moscow will continue to follow the cases of MM. Sentsov, Kolchenko, Afanasev and Chirny closely and to raise their cases with Russia at all appropriate levels.

Yours sincerely,

Vincent Degert

Fundacja Otwarty Dialog

al. J. Ch. Szucha 11a/21
00-580 Warszawa, Polska

Service Européen pour l'Action Extérieure, B-1046 Bruxelles / Europese dienst voor extern optreden, B-1049 Brussel - Belgium.
Telephone: (32-2) 584 1111. Office: EEAS - SCHU 05/047. Telephone: direct line (32-2) 584 2574.
E-mail: vincent.degert@eeas.europa.eu