



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP
Civil Society Forum



RESOLUTION of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum to demand the freeing of 30 Greenpeace activists held by the Russian authorities

On September 18, 2013 during a protest against drilling in the Arctic, the "Arctic Sunrise", a Greenpeace ship, was detained by the Russian Border Service and subsequently towed to Murmansk. Thirty activists from different parts of the world were arrested and placed in a detention center. They were charged with piracy.

We believe that the actions of the Russian Federation in respect of Greenpeace activists has no basis either in international nor Russian law:

- The vessel and the activists were detained by the Border Service of the Russian Federation in international waters, available for unrestricted passage of any vessel. The status of the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation does not give the State Border Service the right to detain and escort foreign vessels. The Arctic Sunrise carried the flag of the Netherlands, which in effect means that the detention of foreign citizens was affected on the territory of another state. The detention of the vessel was made without the permission of the Dutch government. This is also contrary to international law.
- In accordance with the international law of the sea (Article 60 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) the border of "security zone" of the Prirazlomnaja platform cannot exceed 500 meters. Coordinates of the vessel at the time of arrest indicate that the vessel had not violated the boundaries of the "safety zone" of the Prirazlomnaja platform, so there are no grounds for the detention of the vessel also for this reason .
- The charge of piracy against activists also doesn't stand up. In accordance with Article 227 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, piracy is "an attack on the ship or riverboat for the appropriation of another's property, committed with violence or threat of violence." The platform is a stationary object and cannot be recognized as a sea or river vessel. The actions of the activists were not designed to seize property and were not violent. Thus, Article 227 cannot be grounds for a criminal prosecution.
- Greenpeace activists repeatedly warned the Russian authorities about plans to conduct a peaceful protest. This invalidates the accusation that the administration of the platform was not aware of the purpose of Greenpeace, which according to the Russian authorities can justify the forced takeover of the ship and crew.

We draw attention to the fact that the aim of a peaceful protest by Greenpeace was to make the world and the Russian public aware of the issue of environmental security in the Arctic. According to many experts and members of the public, plans for the extraction of fossil fuels in Arctic region, in particular, drilling from the "Prirazlomnoe", creates a number of environmental risks on a global scale.

The Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership expresses its solidarity with the activists of Greenpeace, condemns the use of force against peaceful protests and demands the immediate release of the activists and the "Arctic Sunrise".