

**THE COALITION TO FREE THE KREMLIN'S POLITICAL PRISONERS
WELCOMES RELEASE OF LANDMARK REPORT**

Moscow, Russia; Washington, D.C.; Ottawa, Canada; Kyiv, Ukraine; Berlin, Germany; Prague, Czech Republic; Tallinn, Estonia – The Coalition to Free the Kremlin's Political Prisoners welcomes the publication of a landmark report providing the first comprehensive accounting of the more than 230 political prisoners presently held under orders of the Kremlin.

The report – *The Kremlin's Political Prisoners: Advancing a Political Agenda by Crushing Dissent* – was authored by Perseus Strategies, with the support of the Moscow-based Memorial Human Rights Centre, and was co-commissioned by the Free Russia Foundation, Human Rights Foundation, Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice, and Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

The Coalition highlights the report as a novel piece of scholarship that analyzes how, particularly in the last few years, the Kremlin has increasingly imprisoned human rights defenders, political and business opponents, journalists, bloggers, and other opponents with absolute impunity. The report offers an overview of the Kremlin's crackdown on such critics, with a particular focus on the domestic legislation the Kremlin commonly uses to target its opponents with trumped-up and politically-motivated charges.

And in a first for reports of this kind, the report also identifies 16 Russian officials with “command responsibility” responsible for this repression along with principal prosecutors, investigators, and judges who abuse human rights under the color of Russian law.

In response to the publication of the report, Natalia Arno, the spokeswoman for the Coalition to Free the Kremlin's Political Prisoners, stated:

“In the last four years, the number of political prisoners in Russia has approximately quintupled. This alarming trend can no longer be ignored by the world's democracies. The new report on political prisoners does an incredible job of bringing the Kremlin's increasing repression to light – the current Russian regime is employing an entire arsenal of coercive tools and adopting an ever-growing list of repressive laws to imprison and silence its opponents. It is my hope that this report will help show Russians and the international community the scale of the Kremlin's brutal abuses and lead to meaningful actions to support the victims of the regime. The continued existence of political prisoners in Russia in the 21st century is shameful and should not be tolerated.”

The full report is available here: <https://www.perseus-strategies.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/The-Kremlins-Political-Prisoners-May-2019.pdf>

The Coalition's member organizations include:

1. Action for Post-Soviet Jewry (United States)

2. Activatica.org (Estonia)
3. Article 20 (Russia)
4. Center for Civil Liberties (Ukraine)
5. Euromaidan SOS (Ukraine)
6. Free Russia Foundation (United States, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia)
7. Human Rights Foundation (United States)
8. Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice (United States)
9. McCain Institute for International Leadership at Arizona State University (United States)
10. NEP Prague (Czech Republic)
11. Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights (Canada)
12. Solidarus (Germany)
13. Union of Council for Jews in the Former Soviet Union (United States)

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