



European Council
The President

SGS 21 / 005559

Brussels, 21 -12- 2021

Dear Honourable Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letter of 24 November 2021 and for the Joint Declaration in Solidarity with Memorial, signed by over sixty Members of the European Parliament.

The move to liquidate International Historical Educational Charitable and Human Rights Society Memorial and the Memorial Human Rights Centre is yet another case of using Russia's so-called "foreign agents" law to further shrink the space for independent activism and to curtail historical scholarship and critical debates. The EU deplores the Russian General Prosecutor's decision to demand the liquidation of Memorial and continues to condemn the Russian legislation on "foreign agents" which runs counter to Russia's international human rights obligations and commitments. The EU has called upon Russian authorities to reverse legal steps against Memorial and stop the crackdown on civil society and independent media.

On 22 November, Ambassadors of the EU Member States in Russia met with representatives of Memorial. The meeting was organised in light of the court hearings related to a decision to request liquidation of both organisations. Participants of the meeting reiterated their solidarity with and support to Memorial and in these challenging circumstances. Subsequently, on 25 November many diplomats observed the first hearing on substance in the case regarding liquidation of Memorial International.

Memorial is an internationally respected NGO and one of the oldest in Russia. Its activities remain central to the defence of human rights and serve as a bulwark against attempts to manipulate the historical memory of political repression. Its dismantling would be an irreplaceable loss.

It is extremely concerning that Russian authorities continue to restrict the work of independent civil society organisations, human rights defenders, media platforms and journalists. We will continue calling on the Russian authorities to repeal existing legislation on "foreign agents" and not to proceed with further legislation that breaches its international commitments as well as to stop the unabated crackdown on civil society and independent media.

Yours faithfully,

Charles MICHEL

Mr Reinhard Bütikofer, MEP
Parlement européen
Bât. ALTIERO SPINELLI, 08G162
60, rue Wiertz
B-1047 Bruxelles

Andrus Ansip, MEP
Attila Ara-Kavács, MEP
Malik Azmani, MEP
Benoît Biteau, MEP
Fabio Massimo Castaldo, MEP
Dacian Cioloș, MEP
Viola von Cramon-Taubadel, MEP
Klara Dobrev, MEP
Anna Donath, MEP
Pascal Durand, MEP
Anna Fotyga, MEP
Michael Gahler, MEP
Vlad Gheorghe, MEP
Sven Giegold, MEP
Raphaël Glucksmann, MEP
Claude Gruffat, MEP
Bernard Guetta, MEP
Sylvie Guillaume, MEP
Heidi Hautala, MEP
Krzysztof Hetman, MEP
Martin Hojsík, MEP
Irena Joveva, MEP
Rasa Juknevičienė, MEP
Marina Kaljurand, MEP
Sandra Kalniete, MEP
Radan Kanev, MEP
Assita Kanko, MEP
Andrey Kovatchev, MEP

Andrius Kubilius, MEP
Sergey Lagodinsky, MEP
Aurore Lalucq, MEP
David Lega, MEP
Miriam Lexmann, MEP
Aušra Maldeikienė, MEP
Erik Marquardt, MEP
Eva Maydell, MEP
Liudas Mazylis, MEP
Dace Melbārde, MEP
Sven Mikser, MEP
Silvia Modig, MEP
Csaba Molnár, MEP
Hannah Neumann, MEP
Niklas Nienaß, MEP
Juozas Olekas, MEP
Urmas Paet, MEP
Thijs Reuten, MEP
Sándor Rónai, MEP
Dorien Rookmaker, MEP
Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, MEP
Mounir Satouri, MEP
Helmut Scholz, MEP
Radostaw Sikorski, MEP
Michal Šimečka, MEP
Jordi Solé, MEP
Ivan Štefanec, MEP
Ramona Victoria Strugariu, MEP

Róža Thun und Hohenstein, MEP

Eugen Tomac, MEP

Inese Vaidere, MEP

Thomas Waitz, MEP

Charlie Weimers, MEP

Salima Yenbou, MEP

Alexander Yordanov, MEP

Anna Zalewska, MEP