Russia - human rights

EP human rights chair deplores arrest of second Sakharov Prize winner

Following the arrest of Lyudmila Alexeyeva on New Year's Day, Oleg Orlov - a fellow laureate of last year's EU parliament Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, was yesterday arrested and detained. Finnish Green MEP **Heidi Hautala**, Chair of the EU Parliament human rights subcommittee, said:

"The arrest and detention of Oleg Orlov yesterday mirrors that of Lyudmila Alexeyeva at the beginning of the year. Recognised together by the award of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize last year, both were arrested for peaceful protest against their government's policies. Their arrest, in the name of Russia's constitutional law on the right to gather, only serves to underline that freedom of expression is fundamental in any democratic society worthy of the name.

We reiterate our call to the Russian authorities to guarantee the safety of all human rights defenders in the country and to allow them to work without harassment."

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