



## A CALL FOR AN APRIL 10 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF ODESSA!



*The days following May, 2 2014 saw people visiting the burnt House of Unions leaving flowers in respect to the victims. Later, the building was cordoned off. Erected memorials on the Kulikovo square have been vandalised and torn down. Relatives and others who visit the site are harassed and sometimes they are attacked by far-right groups.*

Foto: Gail Orenstein/Corbis

*To draw attention to the Ukrainian government's repression of opposition forces in Odessa and Ukraine, Odessa solidarity campaign is calling for an International Day of Solidarity with the People of Odessa on April 10, 2017.*

- *All out for the April 10 International Day of Solidarity with the People of Odessa!*
- *Free Alexander Kushnarev, Anatoly Slobodyanik and all political prisoners in Ukraine!*
- *Stop the repression against relatives & supporters of those killed on May 2, 2014!*
- *No to right-wing extremism in Ukraine and all over the world!*

*Odessa solidarity campaign is calling for rallies, vigils and demonstrations outside Ukrainian embassies and consular offices around the world. Activists for peace (In Swedish: Aktivister för fred) supports the call and plans to deliver a statement to the Ukrainian Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden.*

*We call on others to also support the International Day of Solidarity.*

*Please spread this appeal.*



Statement from Activists for peace (In Swedish: Aktivister för fred) in relation to a call for an April 10 International Day of Solidarity with the People of Odessa. Activists for peace has a blog: <https://activistsforpeace.wordpress.com> (In English) and <http://aktivisterforfred.wordpress.com/> (In Swedish) and are on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/aktivisterforfred/> (In Swedish)



*If you want to take an active role and show your support for the people of Odessa, you are welcome to get in touch with Activists for Peace. Send a message via Facebook or e-mail the [aktivisterforfred\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:aktivisterforfred(at)gmail.com) to get in touch with us.*

*In case you are planning a campaign outside of Stockholm, Sweden; make direct contact Odessa Solidarity Campaign Defenders [FJE\(at\)hotmail.com](mailto:FJE(at)hotmail.com) in order to register your interest to participate.*

### **Background**

Since February 2014 when the democratically elected president Viktor Janykovich, in violation of the constitution and with support of Western governments and right-wing paramilitary groups, was overthrown; the right of Ukrainian people to free speech has been steadily restricted.

The continuing demand of Odessans for an international independent investigation into the massacre at Kulikovo square has been a particular irritant to the federal government.

February 23, 2017 Alexander Kushnarev (65 years) was arrested by the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU). Kushnarev, who is a deputy of the Limansk District Council, is also father of one of the young people murdered in the house of unions in Odessa May, 2 2014. The father is actively working for an investigation into to the murder of his son and that those responsible are brought to justice. Anatoly Slobodyanik (68 years), who is a retired military officer (Lieutenant General) and chairman of Odessa Organisation of Veterans of Armed Forces, was also arrested. It is unclear what they are accused of and why they are being held in custody. Earlier on, Odessa region's chief prosecutor Oleg Zhuchenko said that the two men were planning to kidnap a member of the country's Rada, or parliament. These allegations have been met with criticism from several quarters, including from politicians and former diplomats.

The Rada deputy, Alexei Goncharenko, who is elected on a mandate from President Petro Poroshenko's Bloc, is controversial even for the current Ukrainian government. May 2, 2014, he was at the scene in Odessa. He reported live on Ukrainian television about "victory over the separatists" and this was met with applause from the studio. Goncharenko also went into the building and, among other things, he was photographed next to Kushanarevs dead son.



*Photo from court hearings in the cases against Alexander Kushnarev och Anatolij Slobodyanik, March, 10 2017.*

Foto: Таймер



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Another person is under house arrest, while Kushanarev and Slobodynanik are detained in Odessa. There, it is considered that conditions in prison are aimed at breaking the prisoner's will to resist. Uniting Nations (UN) has reported on the inhumane conditions and about forced "confessions" as detainees are held by SBU in Odessa.

The two older men have health problems and it is feared that they will not survive confinement. In early March, it was reported that Slobodynanik's heart problems worsened. A doctor was called in who later ruled that it is not understandable why the former Lieutenant-General is not given house arrest instead of being imprisoned. The Ukrainian authorities refuse to take this into account in their assessments of the case. Health problems prevented Slobodynanik to be present during the last court hearing of his case where it was decided that he is going to be held until the middle of May. Kushanarev will be imprisoned at least until the end of April when the new court hearing is scheduled.

Since the two men were arrested, the Ukrainian police have searched through their homes and also the homes of their relatives and others. Ominous reports are now surfacing about plans to arrest more relatives and supporters and extract "confessions" of plans to commit violent acts against the Ukrainian government. The United Nations has repeatedly reported on cases of forced "confessions" in Ukrainian prisons, including in Odessa.

If the voices of these brave people are allowed to be silenced, Ukraine will have taken another huge step toward becoming an undemocratic police state in collusion with murderous right-wing groups.

April, 10 is a date of great significance to all Odessans, as it marks the day in 1944 when Odessa was liberated from years of axis occupation.

Take action on April, 10 and all other days in solidarity with the people of Odessa and Ukraine!

*Activists for peace (In Swedish: Aktivister för fred) is a non-profit organisation that was formed May 9, 2015 and works with a platform of: 1) Peace on earth and peace with earth, 2) Support for conflict resolution and in favour of peace negotiations - no to war, 3) Yes to common security - no to rearmament and 4) Yes to investments for social justice and the environment - no to austerity policies in Ukraine, Europe and elsewhere.*

<https://aktivisterforfred.wordpress.com>

*The Odessa Solidarity Campaign is a project of the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC). It was founded in May 2016 following the second anniversary memorial of the massacre of May 2, 2014. A delegation of UNAC members from the United States attended the memorial, which was held at Odessa's Kulikovo square.*

[www.odessasolidaritycampaign.org](http://www.odessasolidaritycampaign.org) - [www.unacpeace.org](http://www.unacpeace.org)



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