



Laureates:

Mairead Maguire, Ireland (1976)
Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Guatemala (1992)
Jody Williams, USA (1997)
Shirin Ebadi, Iran (2003)
Leymah Gbowee, Liberia (2011)
Tawakkol Karman, Yemen (2011)

16 October 2013

Mr. Vladimir Putin
President of Russia
23, Ilyinka Street,
Moscow, 103132, Russia

RE: Drop piracy charges & immediately release the “Arctic 30”

Dear President Putin,

We are writing to ask you to do all you can to ensure that the excessive charges of piracy against the 28 Greenpeace activists, freelance photographer and freelance videographer are dropped, and that any charges brought are consistent with international and Russian law. We are confident that you share our desire to respect the right to nonviolent protest.

As you know, Russian authorities have detained 30 members of the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise crew since September 19 when armed Russian authorities boarded the vessel in the Pechora Sea. The crew—which includes Russians and numerous other nationalities—had been engaged in a peaceful, nonviolent protest.

We were heartened by your statement, on September 25th, that you did not believe the Greenpeace crew members were pirates. As you know, the Greenpeace activists were unarmed and used only peaceful means to demonstrate their opposition to the oil drilling operations threatening the Arctic.

Arctic oil drilling is a dangerous, high-risk enterprise. An oil spill under these icy waters would have a catastrophic impact on one of the most pristine, unique and beautiful landscapes on earth. The impact of a spill on communities living in the Arctic, and on already vulnerable animal species, would be devastating and long lasting. The risks of such an accident are ever present, and the oil industry’s response plans remain wholly inadequate.

Equally important is the contribution of Arctic oil drilling to climate change. Climate change in the Arctic and elsewhere threatens all of us, but it is the world’s most vulnerable who are paying the price for developed countries’ failure to act. Now is the time to accelerate our transition away from fossil fuels and move towards a future built on safe, clean and renewable energy.

Advocating for peace, justice and equality

We urge all states to do their utmost to protect this precious treasure of humanity, while moving beyond a dependency on oil as an energy source. As one of the countries most directly concerned, we call on you to personally lead that effort.

We, like millions of people around the world, are watching this case, eager to see Russian authorities drop the piracy charges, treat the “Arctic 30” in accordance with international law, reaffirm the right to nonviolent protest and rededicate its efforts to protecting the Arctic.

Sincerely,

Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate (1976) — Northern Ireland

Betty Williams, Nobel Peace Laureate (1976) — Northern Ireland

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Laureate (1980) — Argentina

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Laureate (1984) — South Africa

Oscar Arias Sánchez, Nobel Peace Laureate (1987) - Costa Rica

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace Laureate (1992) — Guatemala

José Ramos Horta, Nobel Peace Laureate (1996) — East Timor

Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Laureate (1997) — USA

Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Laureate (2003) — Iran

Tawakkol Karman, Nobel Peace Laureate (2011) — Yemen

Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Laureate (2011) — Liberia