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RUSSIAN FEDERATION ACTIVIST IS SENTENCED TO IMPRISONMENT

On 27 May, the Sovetskii District Court in Nizhnii Novgorod sentenced activist Mikhail Iosilevich to 20 months imprisonment in an open regime penal colony. On 28 June his sentence came into force. Mikhail Iosilevich is prosecuted for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and association. He must be immediately released and be able to continue his peaceful activism without fear of persecution.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

On 27 May, the Sovetskii District Court in Nizhnii Novgorod sentenced Mikhail Iosilevich to 20 months imprisonment in an open regime penal colony and RUB 100,000 (US\$ 1,585) fine. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the court found him guilty of cooperation with an “undesirable organization” (Article 284.1 of the Criminal Code) and “threats to a witness” (Article 119 (2) of the Criminal Code).

The court acquitted Mikhail Iosilevich under the third charge – “failure to report second citizenship” (Article 330.2). As Mikhail Iosilevich spent around seven months in pre-trial detention which, according to the Russian law is counted as double the time of imprisonment in an open regime penal colony, he should be released before the end of the year. The activist decided not to appeal against the sentence, as he does not believe the appeal would have a positive outcome but would draw on a lot of time and resources. Mikhail Iosilevich has been prosecuted under fabricated charges solely for his peaceful civic activism. His trial did not meet international fair trial standards.

We will continue calling for his immediate release and overturning of the sentence, albeit through other less public channels. We encourage activists to continue sending their messages of solidarity to Mikhail Iosilevich while he is still imprisoned.