



BY AIRMAIL

Head of the Department of the Ministry of
Justice for Tula Region
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Amsterdam, 21 August 2013

Subject: Lawyer Farid Murtazin

Dear Head of the Department,

I am writing to you on behalf of Lawyers for Lawyers, an independent and non-political Dutch foundation which supports lawyers who are threatened or suppressed in the execution of their legal profession all over the world. L4L is committed to ensuring the proper functioning of the rule of law by pursuing freedom and independence of the legal profession. In that context, Lawyers for Lawyers respectfully would like to express its grave concern about the situation of our colleague, Farid Murtazin.

We have been informed that the Ministry of Justice Department for Tula Region received a complaint in June 2013 from the Russian Investigative Committee against Farid Murtazin, a lawyer, member of Tula Region Bar Association. According to the complaint, during the pre-trial investigation stage of the so-called 'Bolotnaya' case, Farid Murtazin, who represents one of the Bolotnaya detainees Artiom Saviolov, repeatedly failed to attend investigative proceedings. The Investigation Committee has also stated that Farid Murtazin took too much time to familiarize himself with the 64 volumes of the criminal case against his client. The Investigative Committee concluded that this was an attempt to drag out the pre-trial investigation and a violation of the client's right to an effective legal representation.

Farid Murtazin denies the allegations. He has pointed out that the Investigative Committee distorted the facts and that on the specified dates he was present at the investigative proceedings. Farid Murtazin has also pointed out that the Investigative Committee provided no evidence to support its allegations. Furthermore, he has stated that he and his client finished familiarizing themselves with the case files within the timeframes stipulated by the investigation. Moreover, Farid Murtazin attached a statement from his client, Artiom Saviolov, in which the latter insisted that he was happy with his lawyer's work and had no complaints. The hearing of the complaint against Farid Murtazin is scheduled to take place at Tula Region Bar Association in the week starting 19 August.



In this context, Lawyers for Lawyers urges you to recognize the valuable role played by criminal defense lawyers and to promote and support their work in line with the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, adopted by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in 1990.

Paragraphs 16 and 17 of the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers state that the Government is under an obligation *'to ensure that lawyers are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference'*. Further: *'Where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities'*. Paragraph 18 states clearly that *'Lawyers shall not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes as a result of discharging their functions'*.

These principles are universally applicable. Therefore, your government is under an obligation to adequately protect and support its lawyers.

Lawyers for Lawyers is concerned that the complaint against Farid Murtazin could be an attempt to remove him from the case and might lead to the violation of his client's right to effective legal defense. In view of the above, Lawyers for Lawyers urges your government to consider complaints against lawyer Farid Murtazin impartially and independently.

We thank you for your attention to this very important matter. We are confident of your good will and sense of justice and will continue to monitor this case closely.

On behalf of the President of Lawyers for Lawyers, Phon van den Biesen,

Sincerely,

Lawyers for Lawyers

Adrie van de Streek
Executive director

cc.

- *Vladimir Fedorovich Kalachev , President of Tula Region Bar Association*
- *Roman Anatolievich Kolodkin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation in the Kingdom of the Netherlands*