

Subject: Urgent Demand for the Immediate and Unconditional Release of Daria Egereva and Natalya Leongardt

DATE: 20 April 2026

*To: Vladimir Putin
President of the Russian Federation*

Dear President,

We write to express our grave concern regarding the arbitrary detention of Indigenous human rights defender Daria Egereva and her colleague Natalya Leongardt, and to demand their immediate and unconditional release.

Ms. Egereva, a representative of the Selkup People from Siberia, has long been engaged in peaceful advocacy for Indigenous rights and climate justice, including her participation in internationally recognized United Nations processes. Ms. Leongardt has similarly contributed to facilitating the engagement of Indigenous Peoples in multilateral dialogue and UN forums. Their work is lawful, legitimate, and essential to the advancement of human rights and sustainable development.

The charges brought against them under anti-terrorism legislation are deeply troubling and appear to be unfounded. Their prosecution, reportedly linked to alleged association with the Indigenous human rights network "Aborigin Forum," reflects a broader pattern of misuse of vague and expansive legislation to suppress peaceful civic activity. There is no credible evidence that either Ms. Egereva or Ms. Leongardt engaged in or supported acts that could reasonably be characterized as terrorism.

Their arrest, detention, and the conduct of closed judicial proceedings raise serious concerns regarding violations of fundamental rights, including the right to liberty, due process, and a fair trial, as enshrined in international human rights law. The continued extension of their pre-trial detention further compounds these violations.

Particularly alarming is the timing of Ms. Egereva's arrest following her participation in COP30, where she served as Co-Chair of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change. Any form of retaliation against individuals for engaging with United Nations processes constitutes a serious breach of international norms and obligations. No individual should face punishment, intimidation, or criminalization for their legitimate participation in international dialogue or for their work in the defense of human rights.

Indigenous Peoples play a vital role in addressing global challenges, including climate change and biodiversity loss. Their participation in national and international processes is not only a right but a necessity. Criminalizing such engagement undermines both human rights and the integrity of global governance.

We therefore call upon the authorities of the Russian Federation to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Daria Egereva and Natalya Leongardt;
- Drop all charges against them;
- Ensure their physical and psychological well-being;
- Cease the use of counterterrorism and extremism legislation to target peaceful human rights defenders;
- Guarantee that Indigenous Peoples and civil society actors can engage with international institutions, including the United Nations, without fear of reprisals.

We further urge the Russian Federation to uphold its international human rights obligations, including those related to freedom of expression, association, and participation in public affairs.

The detention of Ms. Egereva and Ms. Leongardt is not only a matter of individual injustice; it represents a broader threat to the protection of human rights defenders and the ability of Indigenous Peoples to participate in shaping our shared future.

We stand in solidarity with Daria Egereva and Natalya Leongardt, and all Indigenous human rights defenders around the globe. Their work must be protected, not punished.

Respectfully,

Signed:

A Community Voice ACORN
African Coalition on Green Growth
African Women Leaders Network Ghana Chapter
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
Allen+
Amazônia de Pe
APALAC COALITION
Association Dewran
Banaban Human Rights Defenders Network
Black Hills Clean Water Alliance
CAHED
Center for Indigenous Peoples' Research and Development (CIPRED)
Cherokee Concerned Citizens
Climate Action Network International
Climate Action Network Zimbabwe
Cochitlehua Centro Mexicano de Intercambios A.C
Coletivo TYBYRA
Common Threads Indigenous Peoples Organisation
CONAMI.ECMIA.RS
Confederación indígena Bolivariana de Amazonas COIBA
Confédération paysanne
Coordinación por la defensa del territorio region Bachajon, Chiapas México
Cultural Survival

Earthworks

Elopa Etugu Community Eco-Cultural Preserve (EECEP)

Emmaus International

Environmental Crisis Group

Federación Indígena Empresarial y Comunidades Locales de México

Forest Peoples Programme

FSC Indigenous Foundation

Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker, Regionalgruppe München

Gila Resources Information Project

Het Actiefonds

I KROWN Me Social Enterprise

In Our Ways

Indigenous Environmental Network

Indigenous Peoples of the Coastal Bend

Indigenous Taiwan Self-Determination Alliance

Indigenous World Association

Information and Legislation Center of the Indigenous Peoples of the North of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) "Dyalit" (Point of View)

International Indigenous Peoples Forum on World Heritage

International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA)

ITUC

Katoa Ltd

Kentucky Environmental Foundation

Lingua Franca

Malach Consulting

Maya Kiche

Merin for Development and Technology

Métis National Council

MiningWatch Canada

Organización Milenaria Ashaninka y Nomatsigenga de Pangoa (OMANP)

Pastoralists Indigenous NGOs Forum (PINGO's Forum)

Patagonia Area Resource Alliance

Peace Watch Switzerland

PLUME National Indigenous Women's Rights Alliance

SIRGE Coalition

Sixth World Solutions

Society for Threatened Peoples

Society of Native Nations

SOS-FORÊTS

South Durban Community Environmental Alliance

Southern Africa Climate Change Network

Southern Africa Region Climate Action Network (SARCAN)

SUBI BABA YI DILALAN/REPALEAC

Tebtebba Foundation, Inc.

The Friends of the Stikine Society

Unidad de la Fuerza Indígena y Campesina (UFIC)

Weber Sustainability Consulting
Xavante

Individuals

Tarcisio Feitosa da Silva (2006 Goldman Winner-Forests South & Central America)
Darren Ngaru KING (Independent Research Fellow)