

Campaign Against Criminalising Communities (CAMPACC) and  
Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers

## **Defend democratic and human rights in Russia Justice for Prof Bill Bowring**

### **Protest at the Russian Embassy**

The Russian Embassy, 13 Kensington Palace Gardens, London, W8 4QX.  
Nearest Tubes: High Street Kensington and Gloucester Road.

### **Friday, 16 December 12.30-2pm**

On 15 November 2005 the status and functioning of NGOs in Russia and the future of human rights protection received a cruel blow when President Putin's security forces detained ejected Prof Bill Bowring, a well-known human rights barrister and teacher, and member of the EC of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales (BHRC). No reason was given – or has yet been given - for this arbitrary decision. It is widely believed that the Russian regime was reacting with its customary arrogance to foreign interest in and sympathy with the chief editor of the paper 'Human Rights Protection' and Executive Director of the Society for Russian Chechen Friendship, Stanislav Dmitriyevsky, and of the Society itself. Both are now being persecuted by the regime. Their trials were due to take place on 16 November, 2005, and Prof Bowring was on his way to act as an international observer accredited by the BHRC. Mr Dmitriyevsky is being prosecuted for printing an article by deceased Chechen President, Aslan Maskhadov, in which he called for talks to end the conflict in Chechnya.

Prof Bowring already held a multi-entry visa which was cancelled without warning or explanation as he was deported. The visa was to have expired in 10/9/2006. The Russian authorities knew very well that he has been travelling frequently to Russia since 1983, is married to a Russian and loves Russia, is the founder and academic coordinator of the European Human Rights Advocacy Centre (EHRAC) helping Russians take their complaints to the European Court of Human Rights, and has also represented the interests of ethnic Russians suffering discrimination in the Baltic states.

He is known and respected for his integrity and dedication and up till now was able to travel without official interference throughout the Russian Federation.

Since the Russian authorities maintain an inscrutable silence over this violation of the democratic process and what is left of 'glasnost', we are obliged to draw the conclusion that the Putin regime is (1) in panic and fear with regard to political developments in Ukraine and Georgia, and the struggle of the Chechen people for their rights (2) hopes to get rid of the thousands of human rights NGOs, or (3), failing that to severely curtail the sphere of their activities and (4) failing that make them financially dependent on the Russian state. Whichever answer suggests itself, President Putin must not be allowed to get away with this bureaucratic and dictatorial act.

**We urge the Russian authorities to immediately and unconditionally restore Prof Bowring's visa; to allow him to travel to the Russia to observe trials and carry out human rights protection; and to give a full explanation for his treatment.**

**For more information contact CAMPACC Tel: 020 7586 5892 or 020 7250 1315  
E-mail: [estella24@fiscali.co.uk](mailto:estella24@fiscali.co.uk) Website: [www.campacc.org.uk](http://www.campacc.org.uk)**

