

November , 28, 2024



## Statement

### **We demand to stop persecution and release lawyer Dmitry Talantov**

<https://www.avocatrus.org>

Dmitry Talantov is a Russian lawyer, advocate, the first President of the Udmurt Republic Bar Association, a public figure who actively fights for human rights, independence of the Russian legal profession, observance of lawyers' rights, and who was a victim of political repressions.

In 2018, Dmitry Talantov created the Interregional Public Organisation of Lawyers and Jurists "Initiative 2018", advocating for democratic reforms aimed at strengthening the independence of the legal profession.

Lawyer Dmitry Talantov has handled politically sensitive cases, including the defence of journalist Ivan Safronov, who was charged with high treason and subsequently sentenced to 22 years in prison.

The case of Ivan Safronov is known for politically motivated prosecution and violations involving pressure on the defendant and the defence. Ivan Safronov's first defence lawyer Ivan Pavlov was subjected to unjustified criminal and disciplinary prosecution, was declared a "foreign agent" and was forced to leave the country.

Dmitry Talantov, replacing Ivan Pavlov, was threatened and then prosecuted himself. Dmitry Talantov was prevented from finalising the case of Ivan Safronov. On 28 June 2022, before the defence evidence was presented in court, Dmitry Talantov was taken into custody for quoting a number of publications and expressing an anti-war stance on a social network, which was used as a pretext for a criminal case.

Dmitry Talantov was accused of disseminating false reports about the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (paragraphs "a" and "e" of part 2 of article 207.3 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation) and of inciting hatred or enmity, humiliation of the dignity of a person or a group of persons (paragraph "b" of part 2 of article 282 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation).

During his detention Dmitry Talantov was undemocratically removed from his position as President of the Bar Association of the Udmurt Republic.

The lawyers representing Dmitry Talantov sent complaints to the UN Human Rights Committee and sought urgent measures related to his serious health condition. A decision was made to immediately communicate the case on the issue of arbitrary arrest and unlawful detention.

At the request of the UN HRC, the Russian authorities responded twice, took into account the Committee's requirements and provided medical assistance, but they did not provide any specific arguments on the issue of unlawful deprivation of liberty for expressing an opinion.

It is clear from the circumstances of the case that Dmitry Talantov was persecuted for expressing his opinion, which is protected by Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 29 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, in connection with which the Prisoner Support Project "Memorial" and Amnesty International recognised him as a prisoner of conscience and a political prisoner.

On the basis of Article 16 of the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and Article 18 of the Federal Law "On Advocacy and the Bar in the Russian Federation", which prohibits prosecution of lawyers for their professional activities, the International Bar Association, the International Commission of Jurists and Frontline Defenders recognised Dmitry Talantov as a wrongfully prosecuted lawyer.

On 19 November 2024, the Interregional Public Organisation of Lawyers and Jurists "Initiative 2018" declared violations of the law in the prosecution of Dmitry Talantov and that his actions were in fact not socially dangerous and unlawful, and therefore not criminal.

On 27 November 2024, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation, Mariana Katzarova, supported by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Margaret Satterthwaite, declared that Dmitry Talantov should be acquitted and released, and that the "military censorship" legislation, which violates international human rights standards, should be repealed.

On 28 November 2024, by a verdict of the Zavyalovsky District Court of the Udmurt Republic of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Talantov was found guilty as charged and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in a general regime penal colony with a ban on the administration of websites and channels using electronic or information and telecommunications networks, including the Internet, for a period of four years.

The General Council of the International Association of Russian Lawyers, in connection with the politically motivated unjust verdict, declares that the prosecution of Dmitry Talantov is unlawful and inadmissible and that the Association intends to seek his release and rehabilitation.

We appeal to the United Nations, international and national associations of lawyers and jurists and human rights structures to protest against the prosecution of Dmitry Talantov and to support efforts to defend him.

**General Council of the International Association of Russian Advocates**