



★press release

## **EFA Board Initiates Letter for Immediate Release of Oleg Sentsov**

### **European Filmmakers Express Shock About Trial of Ukrainian Filmmaker Facing Up to 20 Years in Jail**

In light of tomorrow's resumption of the trial against Oleg Sentsov - who faces up to 20 years in prison – the Board of the European Film Academy calls for an immediate release of the Ukrainian filmmaker. Although the prosecution's main witness has retracted his statement, the accusation of having committed "crimes of a terrorist nature" is being upheld and the trial continues. An illustrious group of European film professionals has signed a letter to Russian authorities calling for the charges to be dropped and the filmmaker – who has now been imprisoned for well over a year – to be released and rehabilitated. The Polish Film Academy is the first of national film academies supporting the EFA initiative.

The full text of the letter is:

To

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin - President of Russia  
Sergey Evgenyevich Naryshkin – Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation  
Alexander Wassiljewitsch Bortnikow - Director of the FSB  
Vladimir Aleksandrovich Kolokoltsev - Russian Minister of Internal Affairs  
Yuriy Yakovlevich Chaika - Prosecutor General

From the moment when we learned that the Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov was arrested by the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB) in his house in Simferopol on 11 May 2014, we have been deeply worried. We have followed the proceedings from a trial repeatedly being postponed until over one year later when it finally opened in Rostov-on-Don. Having observed the trial and especially the fact that the key witness for the prosecution has retracted his testimony as "given under pressure and duress", we are shocked that the accusation of Oleg Sentsov having committed "crimes of a terrorist nature" is still being upheld.

In the light of these circumstances, we respectfully call upon you

- to ensure the safety of Oleg Sentsov;
- to have the charges dropped due to insufficient evidence;
- to have the detained released immediately and unconditionally;
- to ensure complete rehabilitation of the detained;
- to instigate a full, prompt and impartial investigation into the apparently arbitrary detention by the FSB and Oleg Sentsov's statements about torture in order to bring all those responsible to justice.



Yours faithfully,

★

Stephen Daldry, director, UK  
Mike Downey, producer, UK  
Agnieszka Holland, director, Poland  
Dariusz Jablonski, producer, Poland  
Aki Kaurismäki, director, Finland  
Mike Leigh, director, UK  
Ken Loach, director, UK  
Wojciech Marczewski, director, Poland

Daniel Olbrychski, actor, Poland  
Volker Schlöndorff, director, Germany  
Béla Tarr, director, Hungary  
Bertrand Tavernier, director, France  
Andrzej Wajda, director, Poland  
Wim Wenders, director, Germany  
Krzysztof Zanussi, director, Poland

The European Film Academy also thanks its friends at the Polish Film Academy who Support this letter:

Jacek Bławut, DoP/director  
Ryszard Bugajski, director/screenwriter  
Feliks Falk, director/screenwriter  
Janusz Głowacki, screenwriter  
Jerzy Hoffman, director/screenwriter  
Andrzej Jakimowski,  
director/screenwriter/producer  
Violetta Kaminska, producer  
Jan Kidawa-Błoński, director/screenwriter  
Joanna Kos-Krauze, director/screenwriter  
Stefan Laudyn, festival director

Olena Leonenko, actress  
Marcel Łoziński, director/screenwriter  
Janusz Majewski, director/screenwriter  
Paweł Pawlikowski, director  
Ewa Piaskowska, producer  
Jerzy Skolimowski, director/screenwriter  
Allan Starski, production designer  
Małgorzata Szumowska, director/screenwriter  
Izabela Wojcik, producer  
Andrzej Żuławski, director

*Berlin, 18 August 2015*