



STATEMENT OF PAX CHRISTI - 19/11/2021

No liquidation of MEMORIAL International in Russia

Pax Christi calls for the liquidation proposal of the Russian General Prosecutor's Office to be withdrawn and for an end to the obstruction and restriction of human rights activism in the Russian Federation.

On November 11, 2021, the human rights organization Memorial received a subpoena from the Russian Supreme Court to attend a trial on November 25, 2021.

In it, the Public Prosecutor's Office requests the liquidation of Memorial-International. It accuses the organization of "repeated violations" of the "Foreign Agents" Act. At the same time, a Moscow court will decide on the liquidation of the Memorial Human Rights Center.

Memorial was founded in 1989 by human rights activists around Nobel Peace Prize laureate Andrei Sakharov. Since then, Memorial has dealt with the political persecution in the Soviet Union.

Memorial's research and educational work has also set standards for the European culture of remembrance; for example by documenting the fate of hundreds of thousands of slave laborers in Germany or the Stalinist massacre of Polish officers in Katyń.

At the same time, Memorial stands up for the protection of civil and human rights. MEMORIAL is also a longstanding partner of the international catholic peace movement pax Christi and winner of the Pax Christi Peace Award in 2013.

The protection of human and civil rights is an essential basis for peaceful international relations and therefore of elementary importance for the relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation and not a so-called "internal matter" of a state. Therefore

- Pax Christi protests against this unjustifiable attack on Memorial.
- and calls on the Russian General Prosecutor's Office to immediately withdraw the motion to dissolve Memorial International and the Memorial Human Rights Center.
- Pax Christi further calls on the Belgian government and the European Union to do everything in their power to protect Memorial, its employees and Russian civil society.
- The Russian judicial system and the authorities deal a heavy blow to Russian civil society, do great damage to European understanding and move away from the European consensus of values described in the European Convention on Human Rights, if you give in to the request of the Public Prosecutor's Office.

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