

29 October, 2013

Vladimir Chizhov,
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the EU

Re: Arctic oil drilling and the detention of Greenpeace activists

Dear Mr Ambassador,

Transport & Environment (T&E), a network of 50 citizens' organisations campaigning for more sustainable transport in Europe, is writing to you to express its firm opposition to the expansion of oil drilling activity in the Arctic and the resulting increase in shipping. T&E also calls for the immediate release of 28 Greenpeace activists and two journalists being detained in Russia.

The threat the Arctic faces demands that urgent action is taken to protect it. The melting arctic ice is seen by industry and some governments as an opportunity to develop human and exploitative activities in the region, such as oil and gas production, shipping, mining and tourism. An oil spill resulting from drilling or a shipping accident would have catastrophic consequences for the region's rare animals, like the polar bear and narwhal, and the livelihoods of indigenous peoples.

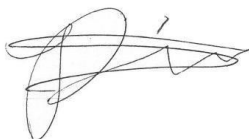
The Arctic 30 were acting out of a deeply held conviction that this is an extremely risky enterprise. They should not be charged with such a serious crime as hooliganism for taking peaceful, safe action to protest the dangerous industrialisation of the Arctic.

You have an important voice in this matter. Please use your position to promote fairness and reason. We ask that your government:

- Drops hooliganism charges and immediately releases the 28 activists and two journalists who have been detained by Russian authorities in Murmansk.
- Ensures that the activists and journalists will have access to full legal representation of their own choice, as well as consular services, translators, and human rights inspectors.
- Conducts an investigation into the destructive and secretive activities of oil companies in the Arctic, and places a ban on offshore oil drilling in the region.

We urge you to relay these requests to the Russian government in Moscow immediately.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jos Dings', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jos Dings
Director, Transport & Environment