



EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

PRESS RELEASE

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Statement by the Spokesperson on the sentencing of Yuri Dmitriev

Today, the spokesperson of the European External Action Service has issued the following statement:

“On 29 September 2020, historian and human rights activist Mr Yuri Dmitriev had his sentence increased by the Supreme Court of Karelia from 3 years and 6 months to 13 years’ imprisonment in a high security penal colony. Other charges for which he was already acquitted by the first instance court were turned back for reconsideration in the Petrozavodsk City Court. Mr Dmitriev has already spent over three years in detention.

The European Union believes that Mr Dmitriev’s prosecution was triggered by his human rights work and his research on political repression in the Soviet period. This unsubstantiated and unjust verdict will inevitably contribute to a worsening of the human rights situation and shrinking space for civil society and independent voices in Russia. This is yet another blatant example of unjustified and unacceptable legal pressure on human rights defenders in violation of international commitments.

The European Union reiterates that Mr Dmitriev should be released immediately and unconditionally. Given Mr Dmitriev’s age and state of health in the light of the coronavirus pandemic, we also expect him to be released on humanitarian grounds.”