



PRESS RELEASE

RAFTO FOUNDATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
www.rafto.no

Press release 25.09.2014

RAFTO PRIZE 2014

AGORA by its chair PAVEL CHIKOV (36)

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FACTS ON AGORA HUMAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

Retrieved from AGORA and www.rightsinrussia.org

Agora

Agora is a federal association established in 2005 by human rights organisations in the cities of Kazan, Cheboksary and Chita, with its head office in Kazan. It consists of 35 lawyers, who cover all parts of Russia, and lead cases in 48 regions. Agora provides free legal aid to victims who claim to be subjected to human rights abuse. To a great extent, these violations of human rights are executed by public officials, military personnel and prison officers. Journalists, political activists, bloggers, and non-governmental organisations – actors who all constitute parts of the civil society – are the ones who are most often exposed to abuse.

Agora also runs the news agency 'Open information' (openinform.ru), which reports violations of human rights by the authorities. Their website is an important source of knowledge about human rights issues and provides information about corruption, xenophobia and conditions in Russian prisons. Aside from documenting abuses of power, Agora also produces reports detailing the situation of human rights in Russia.

In July 2014, Agora was labelled a 'foreign agent' by the Russian Department of Justice because they receive financial support from other countries and are allegedly engaged in political activity.

Objective and mission:

To defend victims of human rights violations, and correct the Russian legal system by using the law at hand.

Activities:

One of the most important activities in Agora's work is the defence of activists, bloggers, journalists and NGOs against the unlawful actions of government agencies. Agora does not charge its clients for its services, but the lawyers get paid via donations to the organisation. Another ground stone of Agora's activities is the production of information and spreading of knowledge about human rights violations.

Examples of successful court cases:

Lyudmila Kotova, editor of the newspaper VolgaInform

Andrei Petrov, anti-fascist activist

Dmitry Solovyov, blogger

Lidiya Rybina, chair of Tambov Human Rights Center

Yekaterina Samutsevich, member of Pussy Riot

Contact information:

E-mail: agoraroga@gmail.com

Phone: +007 9600478228 / +007 9600472796

Internet: www.openinform.ru

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CURRICULUM VITAE (ENGLISH) PAVEL CHIKOV (36)

Name: Pavel Chikov
Date of birth: 19 May 1978
Nationality: Russian

Twitter: @pchikov

Position: Chair, Agora.
Member of the President's Human Rights Council.

Education:

2000-2003: PhD in International and European Law, Tatarstan Academy of Sciences

2000-2001: Master of Public Administration, University of North Dakota

1995-2000: Law, Kazan State University, specialising in international law

Employment and work history

2005-: Chair of Agora (Interregional Association of Human Rights Organisations)

2001-2013: Associate professor at Kazan Academy of Administration

2006: Chief specialist in Open Russia (NGO)

2004-2005: Head of Legal Department at the Public Verdict Foundation

2003-2004: Co-worker at Open Russia (NGO)

2001-2005: Chair of Kazan Human Rights Centre

1999-2001: Legal consultant, fund-raiser, and interpreter at the Committee for Protection of Human Rights, Tatarstan

1997-2000: Chair at the Student International Law Section at Kazan State University



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CONTACT INFORMATION LIST

THE 2014 RAFTO PRIZE LAUREATE, AGORA, SPOKESPERSON PAVEL CHIKOV (36)

INTERVIEW IN RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH

Mobile: +007 960 047 82 28 / +007 960 047 27 96
Present in Kazan, Russia on 25 September
Available from 10:00 CET

E-mail: agoraroga@gmail.com

Twitter: @pchikov

Web: <http://www.rightsinrussia.org/rights-in-russia-community/council/advisory-board/chikov-pavel>

PRESS CONTACT, PRESENT IN BERGEN, NORWAY **Expert on human rights and civil society in Russia**

Name: Inna Sangadzhieva

Position: Advisor

Org./Inst.: The Norwegian Helsinki Committee

Mobile: + 47 976 99 458

E-mail: inna@nhc.no

Twitter: @nhc_no

Web: http://www.nhc.no/no/om_nhc/sekretariat/Inna+Sangadzhieva.9UFRjS3I.ips

Language: Norwegian, Russian and English

Sangadzhieva is a political scientist (University of Oslo) who has several years of experience from collaboration projects with the Russian civil society. She is an expert on how human rights defenders in Russia work, and is one of the leading authorities on Agora.

PRESS CONTACTS PRESENT IN OSLO, NORWAY **Expert on human rights and the Russian law system**

Name: Brynjulf Risnes

Position: Lawyer (Supreme Court)



Org./Inst.: Matrix Advokater
Mobile: +47 975 63 317
E-mail: br@matrix-advokater.no
Twitter: @BrynRis
Web: <http://www.matrix-advokater.no/brynjulf>
Language: Norwegian, Russian and English

Risnes is an expert on Russia and the previous Soviet Union, and has extensive knowledge on the development of the Russian legal system and the rule of law in the country.

SPOKESPERSONS AT THE RAFTO FOUNDATION

Name: Martin Paulsen
Position: Head, Rafto Prize Committee
Phone: +47 55 58 31 57
Mobile: +47 99 25 59 65
E-mail: martin.paulsen@if.uib.no
Web: www.uib.no

Name: Arne Strand
Position: Member, Rafto Prize Committee
Mobile: +47 90 60 47 76
E-mail: arne.strand@cmi.no
Web: www.cmi.no

Name: Marthe Sleire Engedahl
Position: Member of Rafto Prize Committee, Project Coordinator Rafto Prize 2014 and Student Leader 2014
Mobile: +47 98 83 35 48
E-mail: marthe.sleire.engedahl@rafto.no
Web: www.rafto.no

Practical information:

Name: Stig Rasmussen
Position: Head of Information
Mobil: +47 97 65 52 17
E-mail: stig.rasmussen@rafto.no
Web: www.rafto.no
Twitter: @raftofoundation #rafto
Facebook: Rafto Foundation for Human Rights

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THE 2014 RAFTO PRIZE - PICTURE TEXTS

Pictures can be downloaded from www.rafto.no

Photos are free of fuse, please credit



Agora, Rafto Prize laureate 2014, logo. Photo: Agora



Pavel Chikov, Chair of Agora. Photo: Norwegian Helsinki Committee



Pavel Chikov, Chair of Agora. Photo: Norwegian Helsinki Committee



Ramil Ahmetgaliev and Pavel Chikov in Agoras office, August 2014. Photo: Agora