



**Doc. 10781**

11 January 2006

## Freedom of the media in Russia

Letter from Mrs Bargholtz and Mr Lindblad to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly

Stockholm 6 October 2005

H. Exc. Mr. René van der Linden  
President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the  
Council of Europe  
Strasbourg

Mr. President,

For the first time since the fall of the Soviet Union and the communist dictatorship, a Swedish journalist, Mr. Berth Sundström, from the Swedish Television, has been expelled from Russia after three years reporting, without any explanation.

This event, as well as others, signals a hardening climate for journalists, foreign as well as Russian, and makes us worry about freedom of the press and other media in Russia.

In order to make sure that the Russian Federation observes its obligations as a member of the Council of Europe as concerns free media, we ask you, Mr. President, to make it possible to have an urgent debate on this subject in the Parliamentary Assembly during the January session 2006.

We enclose a list of Assembly colleagues who support this initiative.

Yours sincerely,

*Signed (see overleaf)*

*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

BARGHOLTZ, Helena, Sweden, ALDE  
LINDBLAD, Göran, Sweden, EPP/CD  
AHLQVIST, Birgitta, Sweden, SOC  
ANTTILA, Sirkka-Liisa, Finland, ALDE  
BERDZENISHVILI, Levan, Georgia, ALDE  
BOKERIA, Giorgi, Georgia, ALDE  
BRESTENSKÁ, Beáta, Slovakia, ALDE  
CIRCENE, Ingrida, Latvia, EPP/CD  
DUPRAZ, John, Switzerland, ALDE  
EÖRSI, Mátyás, Hungary, ALDE  
ERTSBORN, Jan, Sweden, ALDE  
FARRÉ SANTURÉ, Joan Albert, Andorra, ALDE  
GARCIA PASTOR, Eva, Andorra, ALDE  
HERKEL, Andres, Estonia, EPP/CD  
HÖGMARK, Anders G., Sweden, EPP/CD  
HØIE, Bent, Norway, EPP/CD  
HOLOVATY, Serhiy, Ukraine, ALDE  
HÖRSTER, Joachim, Germany, EPP/CD  
KLYMPUSH, Orest, Ukraine, ALDE  
KOCHARYAN, Shavarsh, Armenia, ALDE  
LAVTIŽAR-BEBLER, Darja, Slovenia, ALDE  
LETZGUS, Peter, Germany, EPP/CD  
LINTNER, Eduard, Germany, EPP/CD  
MARQUET, Bernard, Monaco, ALDE  
MERCAN, Murat, Turkey, EPP/CD  
MIHKELSON, Marko, Estonia, EPP/CD  
ÖHMAN, Conny, Sweden, SOC  
ÖZAL, İbrahim, Turkey, EPP/CD  
RUSSELL-JOHNSTON, Russel, United Kingdom, ALDE  
SASI, Kimmo, Finland, EPP/CD  
SEVERINSEN, Hanne, Denmark, ALDE  
SZALAY, Gábor, Hungary, ALDE  
TEVDORADZE, Elene, Georgia, ALDE  
WESTERLUND PANKE, Majléne, Sweden, SOC  
WIELOWIEYSKI, Andrzej, Poland, EPP/CD

---

<sup>1</sup> SOC: Socialist Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EDG: European Democratic Group  
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left  
NR: not registered in a group