

Freedom for Comrades Kononovich!

International appeal

More than five months have passed since brothers Oleksandr and Mykhilo Kononovich were arrested and imprisoned on baseless charges of collaborating with the secret services of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. Since then, there have been several appeals for their release, all of which have gone unheeded by the Ukrainian authorities. Numerous letters sent by communist and anti-imperialist organisations around the world to the Ukrainian embassies in their countries have never been answered. This shows all the arrogance and presumption of the Ukrainian coup government.

The silence of the other side, however, is no more surprising than that: it is clear that comrades Kononovich were arrested for their involvement in the ranks of the Ukrainian Anti-Fascist Committee and the Ukrainian Communist Party, which was banned following the 2014 coup and whose assets and headquarters were recently confiscated by the Ukrainian government. This is in the context of the tremendous anti-union and anti-communist repression that has been going on in Ukraine for a good eight years, of which the massacre at the House of Trade Unions in Odessa (where even a minor comrade lost his life) and the recent banning of all opposition parties, most of which are left or centre-left, are glaring examples.

The brothers' imprisonment constitutes a serious violation of their human and political rights. That the Ukrainian government, which came to power with the help of the West and neo-nazi paramilitary troops, does not care about the rights of its citizens is not surprising, however: the oppression of the Russian-speaking minority and the extremely violent war waged in the Donbass, where countless civilians have died under Ukrainian bombs, are exemplary proof of this.

The situation of the Kononovich brothers is still precarious and it is still necessary to mobilise internationally against this flagrant violation of rights and against the fascist-style repression of the corrupt and pro-Western government of Zelensky.

For these reasons, we demand:

- The immediate release of the Kononovich brothers and a public apology to them!
- That the trials to which the Kononovich brothers are subjected be truly fair and just!
- An end to the anti-communist, anti-union and fascist repression in Ukraine!
- The lifting of the ban on the Ukrainian Communist Party, as well as all other opposition parties!
- A condemnation of the repression in Ukraine and an immediate halt to arms exports to that country by western countries!

The following organisations endorse the appeal:

Switzerland:

- Gioventù Comunista Svizzera - Swiss Communist Youth
- Partito Comunista (Svizzera) – Communist Party (Switzerland)
- Partei der Arbeit Basel
- Partito Operaio e Popolare Ticino

Spain:

- Juventud Comunista de los Pueblos de España (JCPE)

Italy:

- Federazione Giovanile Comunista Italiana (FGCI)
- Federazione della Gioventù Comunista (FGC)

Great Britain:

- Young Communist League of Britain (YCL)

Serbia:

- Savez Komunisticke Omladine Jugoslavije (SKOJ)

United States of America:

- League of Young Communists USA

Germany:

- Freie Deutsche Jugend (FDJ)