

EHRAC STATEMENT

LIQUIDATION OF MEMORIAL HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER – AN AFFRONT TO RIGHTS IN RUSSIA

Statement for immediate release

LONDON, 29 December 2021 –

This morning, the Moscow City Court ordered the liquidation of Memorial Human Rights Center. This decision follows the Supreme Court's order the day before to shut down Memorial International, the Center's sister organisation.

Today's order is the latest step in a concerted crackdown on civil society and human rights in Russia. Philip Leach, Director of the European Human Rights Advocacy Centre (EHRAC) stated:

“These brutal steps are intended to stop the truth being told in Russia, and the people of Russia exercising their human rights. These are dark days indeed, but this vital work will continue – memory and Memorial will go on.”

We call on the Russian authorities not to turn their backs on human rights, democracy, or their international obligations, and call on the international community to show its support to Russian civil society.

We stand in total solidarity with Memorial Human Rights Center, its dedicated lawyers and brave human rights defenders, present and past.

Since having been founded in the late 1980s, Memorial Human Rights Center has been a central pillar of civil society in Russia. It has provided support to – and defended the rights of – countless victims of abuses, both domestically and before the European Court of Human Rights.

Since the early 2000s, EHRAC has been working very closely with the lawyers at Memorial Human Rights Center to bring a series of landmark cases to the European Court of Human Rights, notably concerning gross violations committed by the security forces in Chechnya, and on behalf of the victims of the [Beslan school siege](#) and the relatives of Memorial colleague [Natalia Estemirova](#) who was abducted and murdered in 2009.

Less than a year after the ‘foreign agents’ act was adopted in 2012, Memorial Human Rights Center and EHRAC [launched proceedings](#) at the European Court on behalf of 18 Russian NGOs which were targeted by the act – this is the legislation which has now been used to liquidate Memorial itself. The cases were [referred to the Russian Government](#) in 2017, but the Court's judgment is still awaited.

See Also

[EHRAC statement on International Memorial and Memorial Human Rights Center](#) (12 November 2021)

Contact

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About Us

The European Human Rights Advocacy Centre (EHRAC) was set up in 2003 by a team of human rights lawyers and experts with a wealth of experience of taking cases to the European Court of Human Rights. We are an independent legal centre that defends victims of human rights abuses before international courts, when they have not been able to secure justice in their country.

We work in partnership with leading human rights lawyers from Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia to address systemic human rights violations and raise standards to protect victims and prevent future abuses.
