

Pussy Riot Member Hires New Lawyers

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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One of the three Pussy Riot band members will be defended by two new lawyers in an appeal of their conviction on hooliganism charges, Interfax reported.

Farid Murtazin and Irina Khrunova of the Agora human rights organization will represent Yekaterina Samutsevich, who fired her previous lawyer, Violetta Volkova, saying that their opinions on her court defense didn't coincide, the news agency reported Wednesday.

Samutsevich along with fellow group members Maria Alyokhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova were sentenced in August to two years in prison each for a February performance at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral denouncing President Vladimir Putin.

An appeal hearing was postponed till Oct. 10 after Samutsevich announced in court on Oct. 1 that she wanted to switch lawyers.

Meanwhile, Justice Minister Alexander Konovalov defended the verdict against the Pussy Riot rockers Wednesday in response to concerns expressed by EU Home Affairs Commissioner

Cecilia Malmstrom that the sentence was disproportionate to their peaceful performance, The Associated Press reported.

Konovalov urged the EU to engage Russian authorities in dialogue on the issue instead of "coming up with a politicized assessment based on unverified information."

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