

Hunger-Striking Pussy Riot Member Moved to Separate Cell

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Nadezhda Tolokonnikova on trial at the Moscow City Court in 2012. **Igor Tabakov**

Pussy Riot's Nadezhda Tolokonnikova has been placed in solitary confinement after writing an open letter saying she was going on a hunger strike to protest conditions at her penal colony in Mordovia.

She has been transferred to a private room where she is safe, Gennady Morozov, head of the local public supervising committee, told Interfax, adding that the move was meant to protect her, not to punish her.

She is now living in a 7-square-meter room with a bed, a refrigerator and her personal belongings, the Federal Prison Service said.

On Monday, an open letter from Tolokonnikova, who is serving a two-year prison sentence after singing an anti-Putin song at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral in 2012, described

harsh conditions at the colony and death threats from the prison's deputy head, Yury Kupriyanov.

Morozov said the prison administration was looking into the inmate's complaint but stressed that the decision to place her in solitary confinement was made in response to her complaints about threats from other inmates, not as a disciplinary measure against her.

Kupriyanov has accused Tolokonnikova's husband, Pyotr Verzilov, and her lawyer, Irina Krunova, of trying to blackmail him to get Tolokonnikova easier conditions, saying the pair threatened to go public with information suggesting that he had made violent threats if he did not give in to her demands.

Kupriyanov has filed an application for a criminal case to be opened on corruption charges against Verzilov and Krunova, Novaya Gazeta reported.

Krunova has denied the allegations, however, saying that she, Kupriyanov and Verzilov met on Sept. 17 but only discussed her client's conditions at the prison.

Krunova also expressed concern over the transfer of Tolokonnikova to a private room, saying such a move was worrying since “members of the prison administration can go into her room, and she complained precisely about the administration threatening her,” Interfax reported.

Tolokonnikova is currently set to be released in March.

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