

# Activists Petition Amnesty for Bolotnaya and Greenpeace Defendants

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Police and protesters face off at the "March of Millions" demonstration on Bolotnaya Ploschad in May 2012. **E. Razumny**

Human rights activists have started collecting signatures for a [petition](#) to extend an upcoming amnesty on the 20th anniversary of the Constitution to participants in last year's opposition rally on Bolotnaya Ploshchad, and to Greenpeace activists charged over a protest in the Arctic.

"Such an amnesty would be a good and right act that would help make society more humane and correct the mistakes of justice," the petition on the For Human Rights group's website said.

The appeal has been signed by For Human Rights chief Lev Ponomaryov, actress Liya Akhedzhakova, novelist Lyudmila Ulitskaya, head of the Memorial human rights group Alexander Cherkasov and other prominent public figures, along with ordinary Russians who completed an electronic form on the website.

By late Friday morning, the petition had collected more than 500 signatures, but still falls short of the thousands of signatures the organizers say are needed.

The amnesty is expected to apply to felons convicted of non-violent crimes, war veterans, pregnant women and people with disabilities, but it remains uncertain whether it would extend to those whom the opposition and human rights activists consider political prisoners.

President Vladimir Putin on Sept. 26 told his human rights council to submit proposals for the amnesty to mark the Constitution's anniversary in December. The council is set to discuss its proposals Friday, Interfax reported.

Twenty-eight environmental activists and two photographers from the Greenpeace ship, the Arctic Sunrise, are facing up to 15 years in prison on piracy charges for staging a protest at a Gazprom-owned oil-drilling rig last month.

Participants in the May, 2012, rally on Bolotnaya Ploshchad that ended with clashes between protesters and police are facing a range charges and sentences. One of the defendants, Mikhail Kosenko, was sentenced on Wednesday to mandatory psychiatric treatment.

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