

Pussy Riot Appeal Referred Back to Moscow Court

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Supreme Court has referred an appeal by three members of the Pussy Riot punk group against their prison sentences back to a Moscow court.

The court said on its website Tuesday that the case involving Maria Alyokhina, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Yekaterina Samutsevich had been referred to the Moscow City Court's presidium, a panel of judges tasked with reviewing sentences that have already entered into force.

The women were sentenced to two years in prison in 2012 after being convicted of hooliganism motivated by religious hatred, for staging a "punk prayer" in Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral against the return of Vladimir Putin to the presidency.

Their imprisonment caused an international outcry. Samutsevich was later released on probation after an appeal, but Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova are currently serving their

sentences and are due to be freed next March.

Moscow City Court rejected an appeal against their sentences on May 29. The defense team then appealed that ruling at the Supreme Court.

Alyokhina, 25, and Tolokonnikova, 23, could be eligible for release under a proposed amnesty that the State Duma began to consider Tuesday.

The terms of the amnesty includes a provision for mothers of underage children. Both members of the feminist group have children under the age of seven.

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