

Russia Disbands Prominent Activist's Human Rights NGO

November 01, 2019



Lev Ponomarev / Facebook

Russia's Supreme Court has disbanded veteran activist Lev Ponomarev's civil rights group months after authorities labeled it a "foreign agent," Interfax [reported](#) Friday.

Russia's Justice Ministry [blacklisted](#) For Human Rights as a foreign agent alongside two of Ponomarev's other NGOs in February after an inspection into its political activity while receiving funding from abroad. Ponomarev, 78, [spent](#) over two weeks in jail last year for allegedly calling for an unauthorized protest against the detention of teenagers facing accusations of extremism.

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"The court rules to eliminate the all-Russian public human rights protection movement 'For Human Rights' [and] its structural units," Interfax cited the judge as saying.

The ruling follows the Justice Ministry's complaints that the NGO had an outdated charter and had piled up foreign-agent fines totaling 1.9 million rubles (\$29,600).

Ponomarev [vowed](#) to appeal the Supreme Court's decision, telling the Novaya Gazeta newspaper that "human rights protection is a way of life."

The NGO's lawyer Sergei Andropov [said](#) the defense will then appeal the Russian Supreme Court ruling with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

For Human Rights was previously [labeled](#) a foreign agent in December 2014, a designation that was pulled in 2015.

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