

Pussy Riot Copycats Demonstrate at Cathedral in Germany

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The  **Moscow Times**

Three protesters in Germany face criminal charges for a performance at a church in support of the Pussy Riot punk rockers sentenced in Russia to two years in prison, German police said Monday.

Meanwhile, Moscow investigators are continuing to search for two other unidentified participants in Pussy Riot's February performance at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral, a police source told Interfax on Monday.

On Friday, Pussy Riot members Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, 22, Maria Alyokhina, 24 and Yekaterina Samutsevich, 30, were given two-year prison sentences for their participation in that "punk prayer," in which they denounced Patriarch Kirill for calling on his parish to vote for Vladimir Putin in the March presidential vote. Three other activists are suspected of having been in the church at the time of the performance.

Two videos [posted](#) Sunday on YouTube show at least five people wearing balaclavas jumping and shouting during a mass in the main cathedral of the city of Cologne.

In the videos, the protesters are immediately apprehended by church security guards and priests, who force them out of the cathedral while the activists throw out leaflets that reference the website [Freepussyriot.org](http://freepussyriot.org). The mass was not halted as a result of the demonstration.

Three protesters — two men aged 23 and 35, both German citizens, and a woman aged 21, an Austrian citizen — face criminal charges for the performance that took place Sunday morning, police spokesman Christoph Gilles told The Moscow Times on Monday. He did not reveal their names or mention the other protesters.

Under German law, disrupting religious services can be punished by up to three years in prison. The participants will undergo further police questioning before prosecutors decide whether to press charges, Gilles said.

On Monday, Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkēvičs said the criminal charges and the verdict against Pussy Riot were "unfair and unfounded," Interfax reported, citing a press release, which was not posted on the ministry's website.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told journalists in Helsinki that Pussy Riot would have faced prison sentences in Austria, Germany, France, Finland or Israel, Interfax reported.

Also Monday, self-exiled tycoon Boris Berezovsky, who lives in London, in a message on his Facebook page called for a [boycott](#) of the 2014 Sochi Olympics over the Pussy Riot verdict.

Meanwhile, unidentified Pussy Riot supporters sprayed graffiti reading "Free Pussy Riot" on a cathedral in the Pskov region, Interfax reported. Another Pskov cathedral was painted with inscriptions in support of the band Thursday night, the news agency said.

In Moscow, Orthodox activist Dmitry Enteo said he would file a complaint on charges of inciting religious hatred against a young man he saw at a cafe who was wearing a t-shirt that read, "Mother of God, cast Putin out," the name of the "punk prayer" performed by Pussy Riot in Christ the Savior Cathedral, Interfax reported.

On Sunday, in an open letter [posted](#) on his Facebook page, deacon Sergei Baranov from the Tambov region asked Patriarch Kirill to defrock him over the harsh verdict given to Pussy Riot and the ills in the Russian Orthodox Church system that he said the band unveiled.

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