

Kremlin Rights Council Condemns Arrest of Greenpeace Photographer

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The presidential human rights council on Friday sharply criticized the arrest and piracy charges against a prominent Russian freelance photographer who was on an assignment to cover a Greenpeace protest action at a Gazprom oil rig in the Arctic.

The council said in a statement that the detention of Denis Sinyakov a direct violation of Russia's law on mass media, which protects the rights of journalists, including freelancers, when they work in their professional capacity.

The council said Sinyakov was on board the Arctic Sunrise icebreaker on an assignment from Lenta.ru media outlet and did not take direct part in protest action on Sept. 18 when Greenpeace activists tried to scale the Prirazlomnaya oil platform in the Pechora Sea.

"We regard the arrest and piracy charges against Denis Sinyakov as an attempt to put pressure on the mass media," the council said.

Russian authorities on Thursday finished pressing piracy charges against all 30 detainees.

The defendants, who represent 18 different nationalities, will be kept in pretrial custody until Nov. 24. They face up to 15 years in jail if convicted.

Sinyakov's arrest has already been condemned by Russia's Journalists' Union and some prominent Russian media outlets, and non-governmental organization Reporters Without Borders.

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