

# Several Greenpeace Activists to be Charged With Resisting Law Enforcement

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian prosecutors will level further charges of resisting arrest against several of the 30 people detained following a Greenpeace protest at an Arctic oil rig, the Investigative Committee said.

"Along with indictments for hooliganism, several of the intruders will be charged with resisting law enforcement officers," spokesman Vladimir Markin told Gazeta.ru in an interview Thursday.

A conviction for hooliganism carries a possible sentence of up to 7 years imprisonment, to which the second charge could add up to 5 additional years.

The international crew of 28 activists and two journalists detained on board Greenpeace's Arctic Sunrise icebreaker in September were initially charged with the graver crime of piracy,

punishable by up to 15 years imprisonment, until investigators softened the charges last month. The Investigative Committee had mentioned that charges of resisting law enforcement officers could be forthcoming in the statement announcing that the piracy charges were to be changed.

British Prime Minister David Cameron told BBC local radio on Thursday that the new charges were an improvement but still "excessive."

"They are not hooligans, they are protesters," Cameron said.

Cameron appealed to President Vladimir Putin earlier this week to "de-escalate" the situation and "make sure that these people can go home," he added.

Six of the protesters are British nationals and the others hail from 17 different countries, several of whom have spoken out against the treatment their citizens are receiving in the Russian justice system.

Asked why the 30 crew members were initially accused of piracy, a decision that drew heated criticism from the international community, Markin placed the blame on the detainees' choice to invoke their right against self-incrimination.

"They all refused to speak. Therefore investigators were forced to assess their actions on the basis of available evidence," Markin said.

It was for this same reason that the journalists and ship cook were charged with the same crimes as the activists, he added.

"If at the first stage of the investigation a photographer or cook had testified, for example, 'I was sitting near my pot and stewing a Russian borshch for our foreign guests,' then everything would have been clear," Markin said.

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