

ISA STATEMENT

supporting

Dr. Boris Kagarlitsky

The International Sociological Association (ISA) expresses deep concern over the five-year prison sentence imposed on Dr. Boris Kagarlitsky in February 2024 by Russian authorities, following charges of “justifying terrorism.” This decision stems from an ironic video commentary on the Crimean Bridge explosion posted on the Rabkor YouTube channel, which was deemed offensive by a municipal deputy.

Dr. Kagarlitsky is an internationally renowned sociologist, committed intellectual, and critic of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In 2022, he was declared a “foreign agent” – a status assigned without trial and used to suppress dissent. Despite this, he chose to remain in Russia, continuing his public engagement and academic work until his arrest in July 2023. Though initially sentenced to a fine, a court overturned the ruling in February 2024 and imposed a five-year prison term. He is currently held in a penal colony in Torzhok, Tver region.

This is not the first politically motivated arrest Boris Kagarlitsky has faced. He was imprisoned in the Soviet era and again in the 1990s and in 2021 for his democratic activism. Now aged 66, he endures harsh prison conditions, and has been cut off from public life, and is denied the opportunity to see family and friends.

The ISA strongly condemns this unjust sentence and calls on the Russian government to immediately release Dr. Boris Kagarlitsky, recognizing his right to free expression.