



July 11, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: July 16 summit with Russia President Putin

Dear President Trump:

On behalf of Amnesty International and our more than seven million members and supporters worldwide, we urge you to use your upcoming meeting with Russia President Putin to address urgent human rights challenges in Syria, Yemen, and Ukraine.

The summit location has profound historic significance. Over 40 years ago 35 nations, including the U.S. and the Soviet Union, signed a declaration in Helsinki committing to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. The resulting Helsinki Accords spawned numerous [nongovernmental organizations](#) and [government bodies](#) committed to embedding human rights into the international system.

The upcoming summit offers an opportunity to follow in these storied footsteps. You can use the summit to make progress on some of the world's most pressing human rights challenges. Specifically:

- **Syria: Commit to ending attacks on civilians:** As part of the U.S. offensive on Raqqa in 2017, [Amnesty International has documented](#) the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects, including artillery and mortars, in highly populated areas. These tactics have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians and have injured many more. More recently in Daraa Province, Syrian government forces, supported by Russia, have [launched a series of attacks](#) against highly populated areas in an effort to oust rebel groups. These attacks have targeted numerous field hospitals in contravention of international law. The U.S., and Russia should commit to minimizing civilian casualties in Syria and ensure that their respective Syrian allies do the same.
- **Yemen: Ensure that Yemeni civilians can access basic goods in the Security Council:** The war in Yemen between the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthi rebels shows no signs of abating, despite the fact that over 6,000 civilians have been killed and over 10,000 have been injured. Civilians in

Yemen have faced increasing difficulty obtaining food, medicine, and fuel as the Saudi-led coalition [continues its blockade](#) of the Yemeni port of Hodeidah. By routinely delaying the arrival of items indispensable for human survival to Yemen's Red Sea ports, Saudi Arabia continues to violate UN Security Council Resolution 2216 and risks further deepening Yemen's already substantial humanitarian catastrophe. The U.S. should join Russia on the UN Security Council to ensure that all parties to the conflict in Yemen implement the human rights and humanitarian provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2216 and the UN Security Council's Presidential Statement of March 15, 2018.

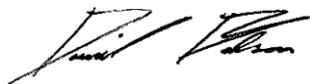
- **Ukraine: Call on President Putin to Free Oleg Sentsov:** Ukrainian film director Oleg Sentsov is [serving a 20-year prison sentence](#) in Russia following an unfair trial on politically-motivated charges. As of May 14, Mr. Sentsov has declared an indefinite hunger strike. Since that time, he has lost 33 pounds and is in frail health. Numerous celebrities, [international human rights organizations](#), representatives of [intergovernmental](#) bodies, and [representatives](#) of your administration have called on Russia to free Sentsov. We ask you to raise his case with President Putin.

Thank you for your consideration. If your staff have any questions or require additional information, please contact Daniel Balson, Amnesty International's Eurasia advocacy director, at dbalson@aiusa.org or (202) 509-8132.

Sincerely,



Margaret Huang
Executive Director



Daniel Balson
Advocacy Director, Europe & Central Asia