

I am writing this to express my grave concern on Mikhail Benyash, lawyer, who was arrested, beaten and detained by police after meeting his client who had taken part in a peaceful protest in Krasnodar, a city in the south of Russia. A court convicted and sentenced Mikhail Benyash to 14 days in administrative detention on 11 September.

I should call on you to immediately and unconditionally release Mikhail Benyash as has been detained solely in connection to his work as a human rights lawyer.

Would you please conduct a thorough, effective and impartial investigation into the circumstances of his arrest and allegations of ill-treatment by the police, and ensure those suspected to be responsible are brought to justice in fair trials?

I should also ask you to guarantee that all lawyers in Russia can carry out their professional duties without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference, in accordance with international standards, including the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,