

TAKE ACTION: Please cut and paste this letter onto your personal or Institutional letterhead deploring the murder of journalist Anna Politkovskaya.

October 13, 2006

His Excellency Vladimir Putin
President of the Russian Federation
Office of the President
4 Staraya Square, the Kremlin
Moscow 103132

Fax: +011 7 095 206 5173 / 206 6277

[Via Web site: http://president.kremlin.ru/eng/articles/send_letter_Eng1a.shtml]

Excellency,

I wish to add my name to this appeal from PEN Canada, the Canadian centre of the international writers' organization, International PEN. PEN Canada is writing to deplore the murder of journalist and writer **Anna Politkovskaya** in Moscow on 7 October 2006.

We welcome your assurances that an investigation has begun. We believe that a full investigation and prosecution of those responsible is not only fitting for a crime of this gravity but is also necessary to demonstrate the will of the Russian government to put an end to ongoing murderous attacks on media practitioners in Russia. Impunity for many of those who perpetrated the reported murders of over 40 journalists since 1992 has been a shameful hallmark of successive Russian administrations.

We were troubled by your statement made in Dresden, Germany, earlier this week in which you declared that Politkovskaya was "insignificant" as a journalist. Anna Politkovskaya was highly-regarded and acclaimed internationally for her work. She was known to a great many PEN members through her presentations to PEN Congresses and we were impressed by her courage as an investigative journalist and her refusal to be intimidated by threats. Indeed, her reports - particularly those relating to Chechnya - embodied the very spirit of investigative journalism and garnered widespread international respect. To overlook the international impact of her work is, we fear, to ignore what may have been a motive for her murder.

As you say, Politkovskaya's murder is a "despicable" crime that cannot go unpunished. To that end, PEN Canada will continue to monitor the progress of investigations into her murder. We will inform international bodies and our own governments of the status of these investigations, urging them to make respect for freedom of opinion and expression a baseline requirement in all future negotiations with the Russian Federation.

Sincerely,

[Your name and address]

Copies to:

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Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations
136 East 67th Street, New York, NY 10021
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Please send copies of your appeal to the following Canadian authorities:

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