

For Immediate Release
Moscow, July 7, 2006

Official Statement of the Klebnikov Family
on the Second Anniversary of Paul Klebnikov's Death

This Sunday, July 9th, will be the second anniversary of Paul's murder. His killers have yet to be brought to justice, despite the determined efforts of Russian Federation Prosecutor Dmitry Shokhin and other law enforcement authorities, as well as the family's legal advisors, Larissa Maslennikova and Alexei Gorbachev.

The acquittal of the two defendants charged with Paul's murder in a jury trial would not be considered unusual if the proper judicial process was followed and the ruling was supported by the merits of the defense's case. But, in this case, the proper judicial process was not followed.

The Klebnikov case has frequently been used by people with no relation to it for their own purposes and personal gain. Recently certain names and incidents have been mentioned in the media that are only coincidentally related to the murder. Such attempts to attract public attention by using widespread interest in the Klebnikov case are both tactless and unacceptable.

The evidence of numerous violations of court procedures was so overwhelming that Prosecutor Shokhin immediately filed an appeal. Our legal advisors agreed, and joined in the appeal. To date, however, the motions filed by the Prosecutor and us to appeal the verdict have yet to be responded to by the court, even though all filing deadlines were met.

We are troubled by these continuing delays in the appeal process.

We have faith in and are committed to the development of a fair and just criminal justice system in Russia, including the use of jury trials. Paul committed his professional life to the growth of rule of law and transparency in the Russia that emerged from the closed system of the Soviet Union. However, to all in Russia who share Paul's vision, and there are many, the delays in the appeal process are disheartening. The impact on journalists who seek to report the truth, and for the average citizen which seeks simple justice, could be numbing.

We remain hopeful that the appeal process will soon begin and bring this stage of the effort to bring the killers to justice to a close. If the outcome of the appeal process is to exonerate the accused, then let it be based on the use of proper procedures and overwhelming evidence of innocence.

The investigation must then bring to justice those responsible for ordering the assassination, and that is the most important task for the prosecutor general. In a few days Russia will host the major industrialized countries at the G-8 Summit in St. Petersburg.

By then, we hope this case will be viewed as an example of Russia's commitment to rule of law. It would be unfortunate to all adherents to rule of law, Russian and foreign alike, if this case continues to languish when Russia has opened its window to the world to view its many accomplishments and potential.

In view of the lack of success to date in achieving justice in this case, we once again unequivocally urge the Russian government to:

- 1) Accept the offers of cooperation from the U.S. and other governments in furthering the investigation.
- 2) Open any future trial to the press and the public.

The Klebnikov family would like to express its gratitude to the Russian government for its relentless efforts to initiate the appeal, particularly to Prosecutor Shokhin and his colleagues. We would also like to thank U.S. government, especially U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and U.S. Ambassador to Russia William Burns and their staffs for their efforts on our behalf with the Russian government.

A fund has been established in Paul's memory to support courageous Russian journalists help preserve historic monuments. The site's address is www.PaulKlebnikovFund.org.

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