

Sri Lanka: Statements demanding the immediate release of Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our correspondents
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We publish below statements from an academic, a senior journalist and several prominent artists in Sri Lanka calling for the release of comrade Bogdan Syrotiuk, leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL) in Ukraine, who has been arrested and detained by the Security Services of Ukraine. The statements are in response to the global campaign initiated by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS).

Bogdan was arrested and imprisoned by the fascistic Zelensky regime's secret police on April 25, on bogus allegations that he was an agent of the Putin regime in Russia. The real reason for his arrest is that he is fighting to unite Ukrainian and Russian workers on a socialist program against the US-NATO war against Russia and all the governments involved. We urge all readers to sign the ICFI's online petition here.

Ameen Izzadeen, Colombo-based *Daily Mirror's* international affairs analyst and advocate for global justice and media freedom:

As a senior journalist and an advocate for global justice and media freedom, I am calling for a worldwide outcry against the arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk, the leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), currently detained in a high-security prison in Nikolaev, southern Ukraine.

His arrest on trumped-up charges raises serious concerns over the fast-shrinking political space for freedom of expression and socialist political views in Ukraine. Together with the indefinite postponement of democratic elections, the arrest of Syrotiuk on high-treason charges also signals Ukraine's headlong plunge into right-wing extremism.

The arrest of Syrotiuk is an attempt to silence democratic dissent in society. I also note with serious concern the Ukrainian government's effort to slap terrorism labels on those who publish views critical of the regime and call them information terrorists.

To support the charges against Syrotiuk, the Ukrainian authorities have cited his contributions to the WSWS. Despite the Ukrainian regime's unfounded claims that label the WSWS

as a Russian propaganda outlet, it is important to note that WSWS operates from the United States. Its wide readership and commitment to pro-peace activism and independent journalism cannot justifiably be categorised as pro-Russian propaganda.

As a media freedom activist, I add my voice to the growing global condemnation against the arrest of the young political leader and demand his immediate release.

Sumudu Walakuluge, a senior lecturer in the Political Science department at Peradeniya University:

Bogdan Syrotiuk, a nemesis of the fascistic Zelensky regime and the NATO-worldwide capitalist imperialist-led Ukraine-Russia war, has been arrested by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU).

Bogdan was arrested on fraudulent charges of sabotaging the territorial integrity of Ukraine and serving the interests of Russia. It has been common throughout history for fascistic and racist regimes to hurl these sorts of shameless accusations against all true opponents of bloody imperialist war. From the outset, Bogdan has fought against the US-led NATO, the Zelensky administration and the chaotic Moscow regime.

The frame-up charges concocted against Bogdan by the SBU, which could have been organised as part of the NATO-Zelensky alliance, falsely claim that he, and the WSWS, are propagators of Russian propaganda.

The Zelensky regime has manipulated this sort of scenario to call for their cowardly war against socialist opposition, including the ICFI and its public organ, the WSWS. This incident has taken place amid rising Ukrainian working-class solidarity against the war provoked by Western capitalism and Zelensky's puppet regime. It demonstrates that the Zelensky regime is brutally suppressing all left-wing movements.

Darshana Medis, poet and Marxist art critic:

I strongly denounce the foul arrest and subsequent imprisonment of Bogdan Syrotiuk, leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL) in Ukraine, by the fascistic forces of the Zelensky regime. His detainment one month ago due to his so-called "high treason" is based on false and absurd

allegations. Reports confirm that he is being held under atrocious conditions in a high security prison in southern Ukraine, with no sign of release.

It is clear that Comrade Bogdan is not just an individual target but the victim of a state frame-up against the YGBL and its political allies. The YGBL, active not only in Ukraine but also in Russia and Eastern Europe, is affiliated with the ICFI, the world Trotskyist movement. It is a well-known fact that the ICFI is the only truly Marxist force in the world today, and fights against both imperialism and its puppets, on the one hand, and pseudo-leftists on the other. It fundamentally opposes the invasion of Ukraine by Russia's Putin regime and US-NATO backed Zelensky regime as well. Both regimes do not wish to see the unity of Russian and Ukrainian workers and here lies the real concern in targeting Bogdan.

The recent activities by Comrade Bogdan and his YGBL, a socialist and internationalist opponent of wars waged by the ruling class along the above Marxist lines, are becoming popular among war-torn masses. This reveals a profound truth: Whatever political pressures, including the fatal physical blows experienced since Lenin's demise, Trotskyism is not dead, and it cannot simply be destroyed in former USSR states. It will continue to hold its head high and will fulfill its obligations for the elimination of world capitalism from the planet once and for all.

Malaka Devapriya, an award-winning filmmaker and radio playwright:

The Zelensky regime in Ukraine has made an absurd charge that anti-war activists opposing the Ukraine war are pro-Kremlin. Throwing out these vicious charges, Bogdan Syrotiuk, who opposes the war on the basis of a socialist program, has been arrested and labelled pro-Russian. I think that this is serious evidence of the fate facing anti-war activists in Ukraine. As an artist, I express my full support to the international campaign by the ICFI for the release of this young socialist fighter and demand he be immediately released.

I assume that artists around the world do not express a pro-war standpoint. With various conflicts taking place in Sri Lanka and internationally we see a divided social environment where human lives and properties have been destroyed. We can see in the regimes formed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the restoration of capitalism how the Russian people have been subjected to poverty, the looting of state property, war and other disasters. The eruption of the Russia-Ukraine war is intimately bound up with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

People must have a correct understanding of the material factors leading to war, such as the contradictions of capitalism and that there is the real threat that the Ukraine war and anti-Palestine genocide by Israel are developing into a Third World War. At the same time, we have the historical experiences of human lives claimed in wars. Millions of lives were lost during

World War II, and we also experienced the racist war in Sri Lanka, which spanned three decades and claimed more than one hundred thousand lives.

Sujith Ratnayake, a painter:

The Ukraine regime has arbitrarily taken Bogdan Syrotiuk into custody because he fights against war on behalf of the workers and youth that are being killed. He bases himself on socialism. It is true that when a war mindset is created, there is no place for opposition. As a painter I condemn the arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk and as a painter I use art as Bertolt Brecht did art against Hitler and the war.

It is the oppressed people who lose their lives in Ukraine and Russia, without any reason. As Brecht stated, when a war begins there will be no brakes and there are no "good" wars and "bad" wars. War is war.

Wasantha Wijesiri, a cartoonist and government schoolteacher

It is clear Bogdan Syrotiuk has been arrested by the Zelensky government in Ukraine on bogus charges. I think that this is an attack on the world Marxist-Trotskyist movement, the ICFI, which publishes the WSWs.

The aim of this arrest was to block the important struggle of Syrotiuk and his comrades to mobilise the Ukrainian and Russian working class on the program of the ICFI and a malicious attempt to cover up the true situation of this barbaric war.

A mass movement must be built against this repressive and arbitrary arrest and capitalist war. We should oppose America's world order and its attempt to seize power in the region through NATO. It should be exposed. In this way we must support the anti-capitalist and anti-war struggle of Comrade Bogdan Syrotiuk and wish this struggle to be successful.



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