

Workers and youth in Turkey demand release of Bogdan Syrotiuk

Ula? Ate?çi
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The campaign of the International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site* for the release of Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk, arrested on April 25 by the NATO-backed Zelensky regime in Ukraine, continues to spread around the world.

On June 13, the ICFI held pickets in front of the Ukrainian embassies in Istanbul, Turkey as well as Paris, London, Berlin, Washington D.C., Toronto, Canberra and Sydney to demand Bogdan's release. At these pickets, an Open Letter written by David North, chairman of the International Editorial Board of the WSWs, was read out explaining the arrest of Syrotiuk—the 25-year-old leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL), which operates in countries of the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine and Russia, on trumped-up charges of “treason”. Leading members of the ICFI attempted to deliver the letter to embassy officials.

Syrotiuk is a Trotskyist opponent of both NATO's proxy war in Ukraine and the reactionary regimes of Zelensky and Putin. He has fought for the unity of the Russian and Ukrainian working class. This was the reason for his arrest at a time of growing opposition to the war and conscription in Ukraine.

After the picket in front of the Ukrainian consulate, members of the Sosyalist E?itlik Grubu (SEG) organized a press conference at the Istanbul branch of the Human Rights Association (?HD). The lack of media interest in the conference was part of a global media blackout on the campaign.

However, journalist Zeynep Kuray and photo journalist Arzu Özkan re-shared the related social media posts of the SEG with their followers on X/Twitter.

The state capitalist Revolutionary Socialist Workers' Party (DS?P) re-posted the press conference video on X/Twitter, stating: “Freedom to Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk! #FreeBogdan.” The party's website, Marksist.org, re-published the Open Letter delivered to the Consulate General of Ukraine in Istanbul.

On Wednesday, the weekly *K?z?l Bayrak* [Red Flag] reported on the ICFI's global action. “The Ukrainian regime, which has been at war with Russia since February 2022 for US-NATO interests, is trying to suppress anti-war progressive-revolutionary voices. Bogdan Syrotiuk, arrested on charges of ‘treason,’ is one of the socialists targeted by the Ukrainian regime,” the report said.

Many WSWs readers from Turkey have signed a petition and sent a message of support.

In the video he posted, Ünver, who works as a professional Chinese tour guide in Istanbul, said:

Bogdan Syrotiuk, who stood up for the united struggle of Ukrainian and Russian workers against the reactionary war of the Kiev and Moscow regimes, was arrested by the fascistic Zelensky regime on trumped-up charges. We demand the freedom of

Ukrainian anti-war socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk.

In a video statement, Kenan, a retired government worker, stated:

On April 25, 2024, the Security Service (SBU) of the Ukrainian government arrested 25-year-old socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk. He was arrested and is being prosecuted for calling for the unity of the working class of Russia and Ukraine against a war in the interests of the capitalist elite of Ukraine and Russia. Free the Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk. Long live socialism!

A worker from Adana shared a video of his support for Bogdan on TikTok:

Bogdan is not Putin's agent, but a principled Trotskyist who dared to oppose the war in Ukraine. The charges against him are completely without credible evidence. Bogdan opposed the Zelensky regime's NATO proxy war, just as he opposed the Russian regime's invasion of Ukraine ...

This is a fight to defend a slandered revolutionary. This is a fight to defend democratic rights. This is a fight to stop a war that is headed for nuclear conflict. Comrade Bogdan must be released immediately.

Simge, a film set worker from Istanbul, released a video calling for support for the international campaign to free Bogdan Syrotiuk:

Bogdan is being held on false allegations and deprived of all his rights, including the right to legal representation. Despite a blackout in the mainstream media, the campaign for Bogdan's release is spreading around the world. Support the international campaign to free Bogdan Syrotiuk.

In his video, playwright Harun Yaylao?lu emphasized the importance of the global campaign to free journalist Julian Assange:

If Julian Assange had to be released today, it was mainly because the campaign for his freedom has found a response all over the world... Today, the same campaign should be waged for the freedom of Bogdan Syrotiuk.

We publish below other messages of support and urge all our readers to sign the petition, send us comments, and join the campaign to free Bogdan.

Önsel, an academician:

I stand with Bogdan Syrotiuk, one of the anti-war leaders in Ukraine, and demand his immediate release. Continue to defend peace and socialism against the reactionary regimes in Ukraine and Russia.

Ayberk, a student-worker:

The arrest of Bogdan Syrotiuk, a prominent leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists (YGBL) and a socialist opponent of the Ukraine-Russia war, by the Zelensky regime on baseless charges is utterly unacceptable for the global working class. This arrest exemplifies the ruthless fascism of the right-wing Zelensky regime against the increasingly powerful leftist movement within the Ukrainian working class. As a student worker in Turkey, continuing my life with anxiety and concerns under the shadow of increasing war threats, I hope for the release of Bogdan Syrotiuk. On behalf of myself, the anti-war opposition in Turkey, and the working class, I send my revolutionary greetings and best wishes to comrade Bogdan.

Elif, a cook:

These undemocratic practices of the Ukrainian regime are not unique. The response of governments to mass protests against the Israeli regime's genocide in Gaza is similar. In almost every country, anti-war demonstrators are attacked, beaten and arrested by the police.

That is why the defense of Bogdan's freedom is also a struggle against war. I call on the workers and youth of all countries to support the struggle for Bogdan's freedom. This struggle is also a struggle against the massacres in Gaza. This struggle is a struggle against war all over the world.

Duygu, a student:

Free Bogdan Syrotiuk, unjustly imprisoned for his anti-war views and writings! Like all political prisoners around the world who are imprisoned for threatening the legitimacy of the ruling powers, Bogdan, who was deprived of his freedom for his views against the war between Ukraine and Russia, must be released immediately. After 1901 days of unjust imprisonment, Julian Assange has finally been released, and I demand that this must be a beginning and that all those imprisoned for their political views be freed.

Ozan, a bank worker:

Bogdan Syrotiuk has been detained by the Ukrainian regime

since April 25. He has been deprived of his freedom for opposing a NATO-backed war. His imprisonment is the latest move by the Zelensky regime to silence all left-wing and anti-war opposition in Ukraine. In this war, he took an internationalist stand against Putin's reactionary program and against the NATO-backed Ukrainian regime.

Every time the Zelensky regime failed to convince the masses to fight, it adopted the method of repressing left forces. This has led to the violation of the most basic democratic rights and the denial of freedom of propaganda, organization and expression. These measures, reminiscent of the fascist governments of the Second World War, will be shown to be futile by the will of the thousands of workers, youth and students who support Bogdan. Comrade Bogdan is not alone. The Zelensky regime must immediately release Bogdan Syrotiuk.

Bahad'ır, a municipality worker:

The ruling classes, especially US imperialism, are now openly talking about a Third World War in which nuclear weapons could be used and which could lead humanity to catastrophe. The question is no longer whether there will be a war, but when and on what fronts. Defending the freedom of Comrade Bogdan is all the more important in such a situation.

Adnan, a construction technician:

The blocking of access to the WSWS in Ukraine following Bogdan's arrest not only demonstrates the lawlessness of the Ukrainian government, but also shows how much it fears the revival of socialist ideas among the Ukrainian working class, proletarian internationalism, the WSWS, the worldwide organ and organizing force of these ideas, and the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Omar:

Let Bogdan free, enough of this tyranny.

Gülhan:

Freedom for Bogdan.

Süleyman:

Free Bogdan Syrotiuk.



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