

Growing support in Spain for campaign to free jailed Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk

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The international campaign for the release of Bogdan Syrotiuk, the 27-year-old Ukrainian socialist sentenced to 15 years in prison for his political opposition to the NATO-Russia war, is winning growing support among socialist organisations, left-wing publications and antimilitarist groups in Spain.

Rebelión, one of the best-known left-wing news and commentary sites in the Spanish-speaking world, has repeatedly published material defending Syrotiuk. *Resumen Latinoamericano*, the Argentina-based left-wing news publication with a readership across Latin America and Spain, has taken up the campaign.

Revolutionary Left, Communist Revolutionary Organisation, Spanish Communist Workers' Party, Socialist Newspaper, Marx Spain, and the Valencian antimilitarist collective Grupo Tortuga, have all published statements or reports opposing Syrotiuk's imprisonment.

These organisations have substantial differences with the *World Socialist Web Site* and the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). They oppose Syrotiuk's imprisonment because a socialist opponent of war has been sentenced to 15 years behind bars based on political articles and speeches calling for the international unity of the Russian and Ukrainian working class.

On September 4, Revolutionary Left published a lengthy statement, "Freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk now!" It described the 15-year sentence as one of the most scandalous examples of the intensifying repression carried out by the fascist Zelensky government amid growing opposition to the war.

It drew attention to the transparently political character of the prosecution, noting that Syrotiuk's supposed "crime" consisted of writing articles criticising the war, the Ukrainian government's authoritarianism and

repression, and the state glorification of Stepan Bandera and other Ukrainian nationalist forces that collaborated with Nazi Germany.

It called on workers, trade unions, students, youth organisations, anti-war and anti-imperialist movements and organisations defending democratic freedoms to adopt and publish resolutions demanding his release. "From Izquierda Revolucionaria Internacional," the organisation declared, "we demand the immediate and unconditional release of Bogdan Syrotiuk."

Two days earlier, on September 2, *Diario Socialista* published a report, "Ukraine sentences a socialist to 15 years in prison for opposing the war." *Diario Socialista* was launched in November 2024 as the official organ of Socialist Movement (Movimiento Socialista), a relatively new left current with its origins in the Basque Country.

Its report stated that the case against Syrotiuk did not rest on any act of espionage, sabotage or military collaboration, but on six articles published by the WSW. The article's tweet was viewed more than 21,000 times.

Below the tweet, one user, Retaliator, said, "And the PSOE [Socialist Party] government sending more looted millions from the Spanish working class to perpetuate the war." Another user, Orellana, noted ironically, "Sure, but he's not from the PSOE. Sánchez will still be delighted to send our money to pay for the golden toilets that are apparently indispensable to the Ukrainian oligarchy." Another user tweeted that Gabriel Boric, former president of the pseudo-left Frente Amplio government in Chile, who backed NATO's against Russia in Ukraine, "will like this a lot".

On August 19, Spain's Communist Revolutionary Organisation (Organización Comunista Revolucionaria), affiliated with the Revolutionary Communist International, published an appeal, "Ukraine: Marxist

Bogdan Syrotiuk sentenced to 15 years in prison—a call for solidarity.” The article stressed that Syrotiuk had consistently condemned the Russian invasion and opposed Russian imperialism, while criticising the Zelensky government and defending the interests of the working class. It rejected the attempt to equate political opposition to Zelensky with support for Moscow, describing Syrotiuk’s treatment as an example of how political opposition is silenced by branding critics traitors or collaborators.

Grupo Tortuga, a longstanding antimilitarist collective based in Spain’s Valencian Community, has backed the campaign and republished the WSWs statement on Syrotiuk’s conviction. The group is known for its annual reports identifying concealed military expenditure. Its latest calculation for 2025, published in 2026, estimates Spanish military expenditure at €66.7 billion, or approximately 4.1 percent of GDP, more than twice the €33.123 billion in “security and defence” expenditure claimed by the PSOE-Sumar government.

The Spanish Communist Workers’ Party (PCOE), founded in 1973 in a split from the Communist Party of Spain (PCE), has also defended Syrotiuk. The PCE now participates in the PSOE-Sumar government, which back the far-right Zelensky regime. In a statement on X, the PCOE placed Syrotiuk’s imprisonment within the broader repression of the Ukrainian left, writing: “Bogdan Syrotiuk is not the first political prisoner we find in the fascist Ukrainian state.” The statement pointed to the imprisonment of Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich, members of the Communist Youth of Ukraine, whose release the WSWs has called for.

The organisation declared that basic political, associational and free-speech rights in Ukraine had been under attack well before Russia’s direct military intervention in 2022. It referred in particular to the repression in the Donbas and the May 2014 fire at the Trade Unions House in Odessa, in which dozens of anti-Maidan protesters were killed.

On August 27, La Marx España, a tendency with roots in Argentine Morenism, posted a statement saying that it supports what it calls a Ukrainian “war of national liberation,” advocates the military defeat of Russia and vehemently rejects the WSWs analysis of the conflict. But the organisation categorically rejected Syrotiuk’s imprisonment. “We do not grant any bourgeois state the right to imprison people for their political positions,” it declared.

The growing support in Spain forms part of an

expanding international movement demanding Syrotiuk’s freedom. It stands in sharp contrast to the silence maintained by the major liberal outlets backing the PSOE-Sumar government, which has provided political, financial and military support to the Zelensky government while massively increasing Spain’s military expenditure.

The breadth of the response makes the silence of the Revolutionary Workers’ Current (CRT) in Spain and its Argentine co-thinkers in the Socialist Workers’ Party (PTS) all the more glaring. The CRT publishes *IzquierdaDiario.es*, while the PTS publishes *La Izquierda Diario*. As of September 4, neither the Spanish nor Argentine publication has reported on Syrotiuk’s conviction, despite the author contacting them by email and making two appeals on X.

Both belong to the same international current and media network as *Révolution Permanente* in France and *Left Voice* in the United States. On August 26, *Révolution Permanente* published an article demanding, “Freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk!”, urging readers to sign the petition. *Left Voice* called for a united-front committee bringing together socialist, anti-war, labor, immigrant-rights and civil-liberties organisations to campaign for political prisoners such as Syrotiuk. Members and supporters of the CRT and PTS must demand they too call for the release of Syrotiuk.

Send statements demanding the overturning of the verdict and Bogdan’s immediate release to the Pervomaik City District Court at inbox@pm.mk.court.gov.ua, with copies to the *World Socialist Web Site* at freebogdan@wsws.org.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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