

Volkswagen workers demand freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our reporters
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We are publishing below a statement by Volkswagen workers calling for the release of the Ukrainian socialist and antiwar campaigner Bogdan Syrotiuk, who was sentenced to 15 years in prison on August 10.

Volkswagen autoworkers currently face an unprecedented attack on their jobs and the threatened break-up of four plants in Germany, at the same time as the German government is rearming on a massive scale and escalating its pro-war course.

The signatories—Thorsten Donnermeier (IG Metall shop steward at VW Kassel), Michael Werner (VW Wolfsburg) and Majuran Srisegaran (VW Braunschweig)—are calling on their colleagues in the plants to support the following resolution:

Freedom for Bogdan Syrotiuk—Against war and for democratic rights

We, a group of trade union members from IG Metall at Volkswagen, declare our solidarity with the socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk, sentenced to 15 years in prison in Ukraine. The draconian conviction of an opponent of war represents a serious attack on freedom of expression and on fundamental democratic rights.

As trade unionists and Volkswagen employees, we emphasize the following principles in this context:

- **Workers do not shoot workers:** War is always fought on the backs of working people and young people, while geopolitical and economic interests take centre stage. We firmly oppose this logic.

- **Opposition to war and anti-fascism are not crimes:** We at VW are currently fighting against the conversion of our plants to arms production. Opposing militarism, just like criticizing the glorification of fascists, is a legitimate and necessary part of a democratic society. It must not be criminalized.

- **Solidarity despite political differences:** Even though we do not agree with all of Bogdan Syrotiuk's

political positions, we defend without reservation his right to freedom of expression and his commitment to opposing the war. For us, defending political prisoners is a matter of principle.

The criminalization of peace activists affects us all and is aimed at silencing critical voices. We demand the immediate review of the verdict and the unconditional release of Bogdan Syrotiuk. We call on our colleagues to support this and to sign the petition for his release.

To find out more about Bogdan's case and to sign the petition, visit freebogdan.org.



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