

ICFI members from Britain and France interviewed by London Tamil TV on campaign to free Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our reporters
8 September 2026

Singam Thayan, of the Socialist Equality Party in Britain, and Athiyan Kandasamy, of the Socialist Equality Party in France, took part in a *London Tamil TV* programme, drawing attention to the international campaign demanding the immediate release of Bogdan Syrotiuk, the Ukrainian socialist imprisoned by the Zelensky regime for his opposition to the US-NATO proxy war against Russia.

Bogdan, 27, a leader of the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists, was arrested on April 24, 2024, and thrown into a harsh prison. Last month, on August 10, a court in Mykolaiv, in southern Ukraine, sentenced him to 15 years in prison, alleging that he committed “high treason under martial law.”

London Tamil TV has 95,000 subscribers on YouTube. During a 31-minute programme, “Is the Ukraine-Russia conflict setting the stage for a world war?”, the presenter Anas posed questions regarding the Ukraine war and the arrest and sentencing of Bogdan. The video of the programme can be viewed below.

Responding to a question about the trajectory of the Ukraine war, Athiyan stated, “Now we see this war escalating. The US-NATO attack on Russia in Ukraine aims to break Russia into multiple fragments, plunder its resources, and thereby bring Central Asia under their control.”

He explained that Ukraine is functioning as a front in a third world war, with similar conflict fronts occurring across the globe. Specifically, the genocidal assault on Gaza, attacks on Lebanon, strikes on Iran, and the plundering of Venezuela’s oil resources are being unleashed and backed today by US imperialism alongside other imperialist powers, pushing humanity

towards disaster.

Responding to a question of whether there is indeed a risk of a third world war, Singam stated that current conditions are heading directly toward it. During a recent meeting between the British Prime Minister Andy Burnham and French President Emmanuel Macron, their discussions focused primarily on escalating the war. Burnham and Macron have agreed plans to produce long range cruise missiles in Ukraine. France stands ready to send its troops to Ukraine, a move strongly opposed by Russia. Where these circumstances lead is toward creating conditions for a massive war to break out in Europe.

People are pushed into a situation where the choice is either war or revolution, Singam stated.

Responding to a question of whether Europe would have the audacity to sever ties with Russia when it cannot produce its own fuel independently, Athiyan explained that German imperialism invaded Russia twice during the First and Second World Wars with the aim of bringing it under its control.

With those two attempts having failed, we now see it launching a third attempt. Alongside this, imperialist nations like the US, France, and Britain have embarked on their own efforts. As preparation for this conflict, they are currently taking steps to introduce mandatory conscription. Germany is preparing for war by allocating €1 trillion toward its military and infrastructure. Their primary goal is to bring Russia’s fuel—one of its key resources—under their control. This will advance to the next stage and ultimately lead to a conflict with China.

Answering about the reason for Bogdan’s arrest, Athiyan explained that he was accused of writing

articles for the World Socialist Web Site and maintaining contact with its editors, anti-war political activities for which he has been charged with treason. Rejecting the lie that Bogdan is a tool of Russia, Athiyan explained that in his May Day 2023 speech, Bogdan called for Ukrainian, Russian, and international workers to unite and fight against this war.

Bogdan maintained an anti-war stance; he did not take a pro-Putin position on Russia. Nor did he take a pro-Zelensky position on Ukraine. Instead, his political stance was that this is not our war—it is a war being fought in the interests of the capitalist class on both sides and imperialist interests.

Furthermore, the sentence handed down for writing articles for the *World Socialist Web Site* is a direct blow against freedom of speech and bears no relationship to the truth. Under Ukrainian law and the European Convention on Human Rights, this conviction is unlawful and must be condemned. For Bogdan, a 15-year prison sentence is tantamount to a death sentence, as conditions inside Ukrainian prisons are exceptionally brutal and his health is poor.

Securing Bogdan's release is paramount. His case serves as a stark example of the severe punishment inflicted on anyone in Ukraine who dares to voice opposition to the war effort of Zelensky's far-right government, Athiyan said.

The international working class must strongly condemn this. Today, thousands of people are sending letters to the Ukrainian court demanding Bogdan's release. Academics, writers, workers, and students alike are fighting for his freedom. Our speaking with you today is part of this very struggle. Regardless of the language they speak, workers around the world must join the fight against this repression and contribute to securing Bogdan's release, he concluded.

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



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