Sri Lankan filmmaker supports campaign to free Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk

Our reporter
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International award-winning Sri Lankan filmmaker Prasanna Vithanage has sent the World Socialist Web Site *a statement supporting the international campaign for the release of Ukrainian socialist Bogdan Syrotiuk. Vithanage, a socially conscious filmmaker, has produced important works addressing Sri Lanka's decades-long communal war and its human consequences, including* Death on a Full Moon Day *(1997),* August Sun *(2003), and* With You, Without You *(2012).*

A regular reader of the WSWS, Vithanage is familiar with and supportive of its Marxist analysis of major international events. He has already signed the petition demanding Syrotiuk's release.

Vithanage has consistently addressed social and political realities through his cinema, including war, class divisions and the human consequences of social inequality. He has also spoken in WSWS interviews about the class divisions revealed by Sri Lanka's 2022 mass uprising and expressed his appreciation for the WSWS's cultural criticism.

He has previously supported campaigns defending democratic rights, including the SEP's campaign to free political prisoners in Sri Lanka and the campaign for Julian Assange's release. He has now added his voice to the international demand for Syrotiuk's freedom.

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Prasanna Vithanage's statement:

A distinctive feature of the era in which we live is that, while war criminals who should be behind bars are roaming free and spreading the fear of war, those who oppose war are being punished. The framed-up case of Bogdan Syrotiuk is the most recent example of this.

Bogdan Syrotiuk opposed the US- and NATO-led proxy war against Russia. He advocated the unity of the Ukrainian and Russian working classes with the working class in the imperialist countries to put an end to the war. As a result, the Ukrainian government has imprisoned him on charges of treason. Should this young man be subjected to such a punishment? Should this young man, only 27 years old, be subjected to such a punishment? It is crystal clear that, through this punishment, the Ukrainian government has violated his freedom of speech. If we stand for freedom of speech, we cannot avoid standing up for Bogdan Syrotiuk's freedom of speech.

Nearly ten thousand people have already signed the petition calling for Bogdan Syrotiuk's release. I, too, would like to join hands with them. I also hope that the struggle to secure Bogdan Syrotiuk's release will become the foundation for an anti-war movement that brings together opponents of war from around the world.

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Register here for the October 13th IYSSE online meeting in Sri Lanka: Free Bogdan Syrotiuk!

Sign the petition at freebogdan.org.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

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