



Press Statement

Tom Casey, Deputy Spokesman

Washington, DC

March 26, 2007

Police Crackdown Against Protestors in Nizhniy Novgorod

The reaction by local [Russian](#) authorities to the "March of Dissenters" rally in Nizhniy Novgorod on March 24 raises serious concerns about Russians' ability to exercise their rights to assembly, free speech, and peaceful protest. More than a hundred political opposition activists were detained and a number reportedly beaten. Saturday's event is the third example in four months, following similar events in St. Petersburg and Moscow, of Russian government heavy-handedness and overreaction to a peaceful gathering of Russian citizens.

Our concerns are intensified by the difficulties that opposition political parties face in trying to register to participate in elections. We call upon all Russian authorities to respect fully international standards involving freedom of press, speech, and assembly.

2007/234

Released on March 26, 2007

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Published by the U.S. Department of State Website at <http://www.state.gov> maintained by the Bureau of Public Affairs.