



***Committee on International Freedom of Scientists
of the American Physical Society***

One Physics Ellipse, College Park, Maryland 20740, USA

3 June 2015

CIFS 2015

Chair

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Mr. Vladimir Putin
President of the Russian Federation
Ilinka Str, No 23
103132, Moscow
Russian Federation

Dear Mr. President,

I write on behalf of the American Physical Society's (APS) Committee on International Freedom of Scientists (CIFS). The APS is a professional physics society with an international membership of over 51,000 members.

It is with rapidly mounting concern that we observe the Russian government's use of the designation as "foreign agents," or the threat of such a designation, as a tool for suppressing the activities of private organizations such as the Sakharov Center and the Dynasty Foundation. In the present climate of worsening international tension, it is a challenge of paramount importance to maintain and promote the free and open exchange of ideas among all of the nations of the earth and the protection of basic human rights around the globe.

Andrei Sakharov was a heroic figure in his defense of freedom, peace, and international understanding and the center that bears his name continues that proud legacy. The Dynasty Foundation is dedicated its efforts in support Russian contributions to innovative scientific progress. Together these two institutions promote international scientific and intellectual communication and collaboration. Such noble efforts should be celebrated and supported, not attacked.

It is inevitable that the pursuit of international understanding will bring people, ideas, and resources from abroad. But to be open to the world is not at all the same thing as turning oneself or the institutions one represents into the agents of unwarranted foreign influence. Moreover, the free flow of people and ideas works in both directions, with the human, cultural, and scientific exchanges sponsored by the Sakharov Center and the Dynasty Foundation also bringing a much-needed Russian perspective on world affairs and scientific progress to international communities. It would be a tragedy should these channels of communication become closed. International peace and understanding will be the main victims.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Herbert L. Berk". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Herbert L. Berk
Chair, for members of CIFS

Cc: Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation