

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARINA LITVINENKO, WIDOW OF MURDERED ALEXANDER LITVINENKO, DISSIDENTS VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA AND ZOYA SVETOVA, AND AUTHORS PETER POMERANTSEV AND DAVID SATTER WILL TESTIFY AT A PARLIAMENTARY HEARING ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN RUSSIA TOMORROW

Marina Litvinenko, the widow of Russian dissident Alexander Litvinenko, who was murdered in London in 2006, will testify at a hearing held by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission in the House of Commons tomorrow, alongside Open Russia's vice chairman Vladimir Kara-Murza, journalist Zoya Svetova, and Russia specialists Peter Pomerantsev, author of *Nothing Is True and Everything is Possible* and David Satter, author of *The Less You Know, the Better You Sleep: Russia's Road to Terror and Dictatorship under Yeltsin and Putin*. The hearing will begin at 6pm, in the Wilson Room, Portcullis House, Houses of Parliament.

The hearing is part of an inquiry into human rights in Russia currently being conducted by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission, chaired by Fiona Bruce MP. Last week the inquiry heard evidence from Bill Browder, author of *Red Notice: How I Became Putin's No. 1 Enemy*, whose company was the largest foreign investor in Russia until 2005 and whose Russian lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky, was killed in a Moscow prison after uncovering and exposing a US\$230 million fraud allegedly involving Russian government officials. Mr Browder since then led the campaign for the United States' Magnitsky Act, imposing sanctions on individual human rights abusers. Similar legislation has been introduced in Canada, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the United Kingdom, and is being developed in Australia, France, Denmark, Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden and Ukraine.

Alongside Mrs Litvinenko, the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission tomorrow will hear from Vladimir Kara-Murza, a longtime colleague of Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov. Mr Kara-Murza is a former deputy leader of the People's Freedom Party and was a candidate for the Russian State Duma. He has testified on Russian affairs before parliaments in Europe and North America and played a key role in the passage of the Magnitsky Act, a US law that imposed targeted sanctions on Russian human rights violators. Twice, in 2015 and 2017, he was poisoned with an unknown substance and left in a coma; the attempts on his life were widely viewed as politically motivated.

The Commission will also hear evidence from Zoya Svetova, an award-winning journalist and human rights activist, who served as a Member of the Public Commission for Places of Forced Detention from 2009-2016, and is the author of the book "Finding the Innocent Guilty".

For further information about the hearing please contact Johnny Monro in the office of Fiona Bruce MP on 020 7219 7042 or Benedict Rogers, Deputy Chair of the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission, on 0782 332 9664, or email benedictrogerscphrc@gmail.com

Notes:

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission is a body established to highlight international human rights concerns, and to inform, advise and develop the party's foreign policy by making human rights a priority. Freedom and human dignity should be at the heart of foreign policy. The Commission aims to ensure that the importance of fundamental Human Rights is kept high on the political agenda.

The Conservative Human Rights Commission provides a forum for Party members and supporters with an interest in promoting human rights throughout the world.

The Commission has produced a number of reports, including 'The Female Face of Afghanistan', 'Supporting Women Human Rights Defenders', 'Child Soldiers; Progress but too little' and 'The Darkest Moment: The Crackdown on Human Rights in China 2013-2016'.

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission was set up by the Shadow Foreign Secretary in 2005 with Gary Streeter MP as founding Chair. The current Chair is Fiona Bruce MP. Since its creation the Commission's chairs have included Stephen Crabb MP and Tony Baldry MP, and most recently Robert Buckland MP. Commissioners also include MPs Maria Caulfield, Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, Jeremy Lefroy, Matthew Offord, Andrew Selous, Gary Streeter, as well as Charles Tannock MEP, Baroness Hodgson, David Burrowes, and Benedict Rogers.