

To all people of goodwill and the public media  
To Kingston University, London  
To the UN Human Rights Committee  
To the International Committee Against Torture  
To the Head of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis  
To the Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader Dalai Lama XIV  
To the Representatives of all religious confessions of the Russian Federation  
To the Human Rights Commission under the President of the Russian Federation  
To the Office of the President of the Russian Federation for Addresses of  
citizens and organizations

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A Collective Appeal from the Followers of the Teaching of Vissarion

### **1. A short summary of the subject of the Appeal**

We, the followers of the Teaching of Vissarion (Sergei Torop), appeal to all people of good will, as well as officials with relevant authority, **in connection with the arrest of Vissarion and his two disciples Vadim Redkin and Vladimir Vedernikov.**

For over a year now, in the complete absence of any real confirmation of the alleged accusations, the Novosibirsk SIZO continues to groundlessly detain in prison these elderly people, fathers with many children. We ask for human involvement in the fate of our teacher and spiritual brothers and express our sincere request for your help in resolving this problem objectively and fairly.

**Despite the fact that the accusation is of a purely political nature, which is only becoming more evident over time, we do not intend to fight the investigative proceedings in what is happening, but are only concerned about the unjustified inadequate actions taken against the detainees and would like to understand the legality of such actions. On the basis of which regulations was all this done?**

#### **1.1. Essence of the accusations and their refutation**

By decision of the investigator from the Investigative Committee, Colonel Y. Chistokhodov, to bring the persons charged with committing crimes under Articles 111-3, (a) and (b) and 239-1 of

the Criminal Code in case no. 11902040048000054, Sergei Torop (Vissarion), Vadim Redkin and Vladimir Vedernikov were detained on 22 September 2020.

Article 239 part 1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation prescribes punishment for establishing "a religious or public association, the operation of which involves violence against citizens or other harm to their health, as well as leadership of such an association".

However, we must emphasize: our Community was officially permitted and registered by the Krasnoyarsk region's Administration Department of Justice on 24.06.1994 under the name "The Community of Uniform Faith", and on 28.09.2000. - with the changes in the Charter of the Community including the new name of the religious organization: Kuragino Local Religious Organization Church of the Last Testament (CLT). From a certain point believers themselves saw the logical necessity of creating and registering such a legal organisation. The emergence and existence of the true Church cannot depend on the existence of any registration, but to organize general meetings in different cities and to publish the relevant literature could become possible only by registering an official organization.

The Community has existed successfully and legally for more than 30 years. We are convinced that there is no basis for bringing Vissarion and his disciples to criminal responsibility. The investigation has been going on for more than two years and hundreds of witnesses have been questioned but to the people under investigation has not been presented even a single piece of evidence which can show what concrete illegal actions have caused harm to somebody.

Vissarion is also charged with setting up and running a religious association "for the purpose of deriving income from religious activities by attracting money from citizens and their labour using psychological violence".

It seems extremely strange to accuse someone who in his thirty years of constant and completely free activity has never had any savings at all.

However, the notion of "psychological violence" is not defined anywhere in the law, including in the Criminal Code, so it is doubtful whether it can be used to qualify actions of any kind.

It also seems necessary to emphasize that the Community, and so the religious organization itself, was formed by people who came to Siberia exclusively by their own choice. The Teacher has never suggested this move to any of the several thousand who came to Siberia - closer to the place where he was living!

Vissarion has always emphasized that one should only decide to make such a move on his own, because it can lead to a significant change in one's destiny!

All creative activities and initiatives within the Community have been organised by us independently. The Teacher is not inclined to interfere or control in any way our creative endeavours, undertaken to help each other and those around us. He is always disposed to respond readily to what we are interested in.

Essentially Vissarion is disposed to give us what he holds, but mainly on the condition that we formulate questions of our own.

His task is not to organize us, but to help us learn how to self-organize properly, so that in the future history we would no longer make the traditional mistakes that inevitably lead to separation.

The charge under Article 111, part 3, clause "b" of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation speaks of intentional infliction of grievous harm to health, resulting in mental disorder of two or more persons. This accusation has been based on identical denunciations made by two different people at the same time - K. and M. These people had been previously diagnosed, as witnesses in a completely different criminal case. Moreover, the diagnosis had been made on their own words and without a medical examination. We are also aware of an authoritative medical scientific opinion, according to which the diagnoses made to the alleged victims clearly had nothing to do with grievous harm.

It is remarkable that none of these "victims" has ever been able to express anything specific and concrete about how they have been harmed. Moreover, they later began to tell those around them that the harm was not caused by anyone in particular, but resulted just from their stay amongst believers.

The prosecution often mentions some kind of "psychological influence technique" which has been supposedly used against people's will and exclusively to their detriment. But where is the description of those specific methods made at least in one of the court hearings? What exactly were the actions or words that disturbed the peace and sleep of the two "victims" (which, according to the expert opinion, constituted grave harm)?

We, i.e. many thousands of believers, have witnessed all of Vissarion's meetings with us, the content of which has been captured on audio recordings, video clips, in written form and is to be found in the public domain. In all of these meetings, the main theme has always been the total unacceptability of any kind of violence in man-to-man relationship!

It is in this context that the accusation of "psychological violence" is, for us, quite naturally perceived as a blatant attempt to denigrate our values.

## **1.2. Unjustified detention**

It is unclear why detention cannot be replaced by house arrest or other preventive measures. What is preventing this? After all, there is no evidence, not even an indication of their existence. Meanwhile, the term of detention of people dear to us has been prolonged for the fourth time. And the detention itself has lasted for more than a year on the bare assumption that the accused will continue to exert pressure on the victims.

This is a situation in which people whose guilt has not been proven in any way are being held in custody. They are thereby subjected to grievous physical and psychological harm, the same harm that is imputable to them.

It is not only them who suffer, but also other innocent people: children, wives and relatives of those who are illegally detained in pre-trial detention centre.

Vissarion has seven children, including two minors (aged 9 and 13) who need their father to be with them; Vladimir Vedernikov has three adult children, two of whom are adopted; Vadim Redkin has five daughters, three of whom are minors (aged 3, 9 and 12). The children have developed health and nervous system problems as a result of the stress they have been through.

In light of the above, we ask all people who care about the situation and the competent Russian and international organizations to help us clarify what is happening and shed light on the events related to the detention of our Teacher and his two disciples.

We write to you with the hope that the world community in the face of human rights organizations in Russia and around the world, leaders of religious organizations, state officials, representatives of science and culture will take a warm human part in the fate of the innocent people and draw the attention of the media and, especially, TV channels to the situation around the Community, the Teacher and his disciples.

## **2. MAIN PART**

### **2.1. Vissarion and his teaching**

Vissarion (Sergei Anatolievich Torop) is a prominent spiritual teacher of the contemporary epoch. While the scope of Vissarion's personality is yet to be fully appreciated, one cannot fail to see the scope of the Teacher's world-view issues, the concrete and constructive humanism of his ideas, his pedagogical talent, the precision and richness of his thoughts and the moral height of his personality.

During the past thirty years (1991-2021) thousands of Vissarion's followers appeared. And not only in Russia, but also in the entire post-Soviet space, as well as in Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, Finland, France, the USA and other countries.

Over the years, people of different nationalities, representatives of many cultures, traditional confessions and new religious movements have come to the Vissarion Community, all of them live and work here in harmonious unity in brotherly and mutual assistance.

In this sense, it is significant that Vissarion was elected as a member of the International Academy "Spiritual Unity of the Peoples of the World", which includes prominent scholars, diplomats, and representatives of Christian and Islamic denominations.

Most recently, the Norwegian Nobel Committee accepted Vissarion's nomination for the 2022 Nobel Peace Prize.

In addition, Vissarion is a fine artist. He has painted a cycle of pictures under the theme of Human Vices and Virtues as well as many landscapes and portraits. Vissarion painted in oil and pastel, using the techniques of the old masters. For his works he was awarded the first prize in the category "For Freshness of Sight" at the International Festival of Fine Arts "Traditions and Modernity", held in Moscow in 2008.

As for the teaching of Vissarion, it is addressed to all people and contains answers to the most complex questions of human existence. The Teacher has written a number of books: “The Pre-Annunciation”, “The Book of Addresses”, “The Book of Fundamentals”, “The Afterword”, “The Commandments”, “The Last Hope” and “Pivotal Time”. The Last Testament includes the books written by Vissarion and also a biographical narrative of his activities (Vadim's Scriptures), where Vadim Redkin has recorded almost everything the Teacher has said in his numerous meetings.

The 18 volumes of The Last Testament contain a great number of Teacher's answers to different people. In a way, the books of the Last Testament are the result of our efforts, where we have recorded all the various clues given by the Teacher in response to our questions.

Many authors - philosophers, religious scholars, cultural historians - have written and published works devoted to the teaching of Vissarion, in which it is being examined with scientific objectivity and receives the highest marks. Let us mention just some of these works:

Encyclopedic Dictionary of Cultural Studies / Under the general editorship of Doctor of Philosophy, Professor A. A. Radugin. - Moscow: Publishing house Centre, 1997. - 478 c. (Articles: Soul, Life, Book, Love, Wisdom;)

Light of Truth from Siberia / Edited by Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Professor K.F.Komarovskikh. - Balashov: "Nikolaev", 2000. - 56 c.;

Mukhanov G. S. Ways of comprehending the laws of mind and soul development // The human phenomenon: spirit, soul, spirituality. - Kazan: Publishing house "By cities and towns", 2001. - C. 15-19;

Nesterov V. The Second Coming of Christ. Theological research based on Christ's sermons, personal meetings, disputes, correspondence with the Patriarchy and its structures, and scriptures: The Bible, the Koran and The Last Testament. - Moscow: Balashov: "Nikolaev". - 2008. - 334 c.

An important monograph in this respect is The Philosophy of the Future, published in Almaty (Complex LLP, 1999. - 183 pp.). It was written by Doctor of Philosophic Sciences Professor S.Y. Kolchigin and Academician of the International Academy "Ecology", Candidate of Philosophic Sciences, associated professor A.B.Kapyshev (the second edition of the book was published in Moscow in 2006). According to the authors, The Last Testament is remarkable for its depth and clarity; it is very rich in content and humanistic perspectives.

The Last Testament really reveals a whole range of essential worldview themes, and the quintessence of Vissarion's teaching is the question of the human soul and the laws of its development. The teacher points out that man truly develops and evolves not through the intellect and technological innovations alone, but through the correct disclosure of the essence of man - the soul.

**Practically, the entire activity of Vissarion is devoted to the development of the soul and the cultivation of higher spiritual feelings. The Teacher constantly and in great detail explains**

## **the vital importance of the unconditional morality, of the unselfish way of living for the sake of others and the world around us.**

Here are some of the fundamental foundations of Vissarion's teaching:

"Religion, in the true sense, is the art of the development of the soul; and since the soul is the essence of man, religion is the art of the development of man" (Book of Addresses. Ch. 19:27-28).

"Speaking of money, be careful! By talking about money you begin to judge your soulmates. This is a dangerous phenomenon.

The life of any one of you is always more valuable than any amount of money.

Don't you dare put money above the value of a person.

Money is something you can put under your feet and step on.

But if what you step on is above you, what is the value of you then?" (The Last Testament. Ch. 5. Ch. 14:37-41).

"Henceforth you must become incapable of holding any coldness - never, under any circumstances and under no flag do you have the right even to think badly of anyone!" (The Pre-Annunciation, 183).

"And a woman - TV journalist, who was engrossed in the conversation - asked: 'What does it mean to love your neighbour as yourself? What does it mean to love yourself?' And the Teacher said, 'Now I'll tell you otherwise. Love your neighbour more than yourself. Give your whole self to people'. (Scriptures. Part 2. Ch. 10:61-62).

For Vissarion, these are not just words. His life affirms every word he has said.

### **2.2. The Community. Its history and activity**

Almost 30 years ago the words of Vissarion resonated in the soul of each of us, and they are relevant today: by changing our inner world, by changing the natural egoistic attitude to spiritual moral qualities that are distinctive of a genuine human being, we change the world around us.

"Change yourself, your attitude towards others, and the world in which you live will be transformed" (Seraphim of Sarov).

It is the most difficult path on Earth, but it is the only one and it is beautiful.

Being very different in culture, upbringing, education, age and health, we tried to come together, building our Community as a brotherhood. We came to remote abandoned taiga villages where there were no roads, no shops, no electricity. Those of us who could not leave unfinished business in the cities used to come here on holiday, volunteering their efforts or material means in order to help. We understood: it was our common cause - in the very heart of the Earth for the

whole world we were building a shrine, in the harsh land of the Siberian taiga. This is how ancient monasteries and temples have been built.

Here is the testimony of Maria Kuzina-Muzanova, an arts theorist from St. Petersburg: "I spent six years in the Community from the very beginning of its formation. At various times, a large group of followers of Vissarion left St. Petersburg and other places to go to Siberia. Among them were artists, musicians, sculptors, architects, doctors, teachers and other professionals who were needed here too. I had my own flat, an interesting job in one of St. Petersburg's famous museums, and I was surrounded by my relatives and friends. But we met the Spiritual Teacher and each of us made his or her own choice. I followed Him, it was as if I followed life itself! I found myself in Siberia - there were the pure rushing rivers, the mysterious mountains, the majestic Taiga, and the Wise Teacher nearby!"

In organising our lives, we were not confronted with harsh natural conditions only. The large gathering of people in a limited space showed that we could not build anything without learning to live by the laws of brotherhood, unity and mutual understanding. These were key moments in the formation and life of the Community.

In our view, the most important achievement of the people who followed Vissarion was their constant work over their own inner world, the ability to make decisions collectively and to work together. Vissarion helped us to organise ourselves, to learn how to respond to each other's actions and to negotiate properly. All meetings with Him were held at our request and were based on our initiative and willingness to ask questions. The Teacher never went into the details of our creative endeavours and took part only when we asked about our own psychological problems or about problems in the interaction with each other.

The Siberian nature hardened us and taught us to live according to the laws of Harmony. Improving ourselves internally, united by common labour, we built churches, schools, workshops, kindergartens, houses for creative work, guest houses, decorated the Earth with flowers and gardens. New songs, poems and music were being born, and beautiful festivals with common dances and round dances were being organised. At the same time our children were being born, and they absorbed with their mother's milk the laws of truth, the harmony with nature, the joy of the true brotherhood.

Thus a real pearl, the multinational ecological Community, was born in the endless harsh taiga.

Tired, disappointed by life, people in need of human warmth also reached out to the big brotherly family. Some of the visitors stayed, some went back. Here it quickly became clear that nothing can be gained without hard work. A decent life could only be built by working hard all together.

The community grew, and more and more people in Russia and other countries learned about it.

Siberian ecological settlement initially aroused and continues to arouse interest by the fact that it is built on new principles of living arrangement, the basis of which is the concept of "One Common Family".

One Common Family (also Unified Family) implies harmonious relations among people, their ability to unselfishly create everything necessary for each other with their own hands, development of arts and crafts, ability to live and work on the land, proper education of the younger generation, decreasing the role of money relations.

The people in the Community actively strive to learn traditional crafts and trades. Children are taught the basics of art and crafts along with the general education subjects, and upon graduation they are given the freedom to choose their own life path.

The masters of the Community are often invited to participate in different exhibitions, and our artists perform at concerts and festivals in the region. The Community has its own ballet, circus studio, and symphony orchestra.

Tourists come here from all over Russia and from many other countries. The Minister of Economy and Regional Development of the Krasnoyarsk Territory and representatives of the Ministry of Culture visited us and were delighted by what they saw. They were surprised by how much has been created in the community over the years, without any state funding.

Today the Community is one of the largest eco-settlements (eco-cities) in the world.

### **2.3 The operation against the Community and the Teacher**

But we did interfere with someone though.

On the early morning of 22 September 2020, on a quiet warm day in the beginning of autumn, military helicopters swirled over the unique city of craftsmen known as the Abode of Dawn. They were followed by other military vehicles, which crawled in endless columns through many communal villages. Children were frightened and asked their parents what was happening. It seemed as if an undeclared war had begun. A war against peaceful citizens building a beautiful spiritual-creative community of people. Four helicopters, about 50 military vehicles, special vehicles, soldiers with specially trained dogs, snipers, machine-guns - the scale of the operation was comparable to that of those carried out against large organized gangs.

Some soldiers said they had participated in a similar operation ten years earlier, but then against a group of militants in the Caucasus. These military men themselves were perplexed as to why a large-scale operation was needed in our Community: they saw a beautiful peaceful settlement in the foothills of the Sayan Mountains; they saw simple people who were silently seeing off their spiritual Teacher, who was handcuffed, with pain in their hearts and tears in their eyes.

We are still in utter bewilderment. What was the purpose of such a massive military operation? Why were special forces and military equipment used against civilians?

The words with which Jesus spoke after the Last Supper to those who came to take Him away are relevant: "...As if you went out against a robber with swords and staves to take me; every day I sat with you, teaching in the Temple, and you did not take me" (Gospel of Matthew 26:55).

All the people, who have participated in the building of the Community, all who are now living in it and all who in one way or another have come into contact with this unique phenomenon in Siberia, are being left with the feeling that the events of September 22, 2020 were a violation of the law. The security forces carried it out to their own detriment, leaving in the shadows the organizers and masterminds of the illegal action.

How did the capture itself take place?

Here is Vissarion's testimony from his letter to his loved ones:

"...I will mention the specific strangeness that began to be tolerated by the persecution party from the very beginning.

In the early morning, when I let a large mass of unknown people into my house, some of them armed with automatic weapons, they arrested me and handcuffed me, without ever identifying themselves.

That is, I did not know at all who had come, where they had taken me and for what purpose.

I found out everything only in Novosibirsk!

Our lawyers were only allowed into the courtroom, where the preventive measure was being chosen.

Before that, when we were brought to the investigator's office, where we were to be familiarised with the charges, our lawyers were deliberately not allowed in, which they themselves recorded.

In the investigator's office were waiting for us some lawyers, which the investigators had prepared for us on their own."

Testimony of Vadim Redkin (from the statement to the Commissioner for Human Rights Mark Denisov):

"Dear Ombudsman for Krasnoyarsk region M.G. Denisov, Federal Representative for Human Rights at the President of Russia, legal institutions!

I, Redkin Vadim Vyacheslavovich, born in 1958, inform you about law violations against me.

On 22.09.2020 about 8 o'clock in the morning I was detained in my house in the Abode of Dawn by a group of armed people in uniform and masks, who jumped out of helicopters without presenting any certificates and orders on their part.

When I was taken out of the house (handcuffed), I was rudely and unexpectedly knocked to the floor in the doorway by two men (I felt nauseous and dizzy), one of these guys twisted my handcuffed hands until I was in great pain (a bruise was later recorded by a traumatologist in Novosibirsk) and my hand unlocked my personal smartphone, which he had seized earlier.

When we together with the spiritual Teacher Vissarion (S. A. Torop, born in 1961) and Vladimir Vedernikov, born in 1963, were brought from Abakan to the 5th Department of the Investigator's Office in Novosibirsk, my lawyer was not allowed to me, although he had been waiting for us for

2 hours at the Department, and the investigator knew about it. Subsequently I found out that my friends had been treated in the same way.

Neither in Abakan (airport) during interrogation by investigator of the 5th Division Metelev K.Y., nor in Novosibirsk during interrogation by investigator Frolov A.S. was I allowed to make one call, though this rule was announced to me by the investigator.

The sense of ongoing lawlessness intensified when all the federal channels were flooded with dirty lies about the Teacher and the Community, using false information, creating a negative image and moral crucifixion of our spiritual Teacher and our entire communal way of life before the court decisions were made. Which in turn has damaged the honour, the dignity and the reputation of the Last Testament Church and the detainees themselves.

All the sins of modern society were attempted to be pinned on us, sticky mud was poured on the Community, where every child was told from birth that everything around is alive, that even a broken twig feels pain, that one should live honestly and openly, creating beauty around. In the Community, even houses were never closed, children could be fed in every house, guests were welcomed by all who had the opportunity. But the achievements of the Community did not interest the media at all. Television talk shows gathered the many-faced and "reusable" denouncers of Vissarion on their platforms, broadcasting the same thing for all the years of the Community's existence.

Those who are ready to speak in defence of Vissarion are not even allowed to open their mouths. The programme with Vissarion's three eldest sons has not been aired at all. Instead, footage showing weapons, money, and alcohol allegedly found in the Teacher's home is being broadcast without examining whether the footage has anything to do with the detainees at all. In the meantime, we deny that the filming itself took place at Vissarion's house: the video footage does not match; these items were filmed in a completely different location. And of the money actually found, which was officially confiscated, the amount was in the range of 700 roubles. The lies and slander of the media are obvious.

The most peaceful Creative Community - who could be in the way?

#### **2.4. Our concerns**

We have stood up for our Teacher and the Community. Hundreds of letters were written to various controlling bodies, the media and other institutions. Most of the time we received formal replies, but there were also people sympathetic to the Community who tried to help within their abilities. For example, in February 2021 we sent an appeal to the Human Rights Ombudsman in the Russian Federation, Tatyana Moskalkova. On March 29, 2021 the office of the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Russian Federation hosted a meeting with a representative of the Community to examine the alleged violations in the course of the investigation of the "Vissarion case" and the court proceeding to liquidate the Kuragino local religious organization "Church of the Last Testament". At the meeting was presented evidence of violations of the civil rights of residents of Kuragino region, living in the Community, during the investigation. Three dozen of civilians

described their difficult psychological state after the special operation for the arrest of our Teacher.

Copies of the certificates of violations are enclosed in this appeal.

**We are very concerned about the conditions in which the three prisoners now find themselves, having led a healthy life without alcohol or tobacco for many years before. Vissarion, Vadim and Vladimir have been vegetarians for many years, but have had to give up the local cuisine for over a year, where the only acceptable food for them is plain porridge on water in the morning. Therefore, the long stay in a pre-trial detention centre is in itself an ordeal for them and is a severe blow to their health.**

From Vadim Redkin's speech at the Novosibirsk Regional Court on 20.09.21:

**"...the deterioration of our situation, our physical and psychological condition, is an undeniable fact. We are of retirement age, I am 64 years old. I have been a vegetarian for more than 30 years, I do not smoke. The absence, natural and understandable in prison, of the usual vegetarian diet has led to an exacerbation of pancreatic disease. Headaches and sleep disturbances are present. What do you think, if a person has not smoked all his life, what can a year in prison with a serious lung disease in remission lead to? And it is proposed to keep us in prison for a few more months. What for? What for?**

.....

**But the most important thing about what's going on (in the extension of the detention) is the harm to my children's health. And you get, on the one hand, a repetitive sequence of unreasoned circumstances (!), on the other hand - children, about whose health, as if we all care... So what is more important: playing a repetitive sequence of assumptions without arguments or the health of children?!"**

But the most outrageous fact for us was torture, which, as it became known to us, was not only allowed in pre-detention centre-1 of Novosibirsk, but was initiated by employees of this institution.

From Vladimir Vedernikov's statement at the Novosibirsk Regional Court on 16.09.2021:

**"The investigation's petition states that we can influence the victims and witnesses, but so far we have been influenced, both mentally and physically.**

**For instance, at the end of January I was tortured for five days by my cellmates, who did not conceal their aims and who had given the task. The purpose of torture was to confess about crimes that we had not committed. The torturers were not hiding the fact that the investigation authorities were interested in this. After I spoke openly about the torture in the pre-trial detention centre, the administration started and is still continuing its psychological pressure on us. This is manifested in the form of administrative penalties for violations of the internal regulations, which we did not commit. They planted prohibited items on us, prepared fictitious reports, provided false documents at the request of our lawyers, moved us from cell to cell every week (I was transferred from one cell to another at**

**least 30 times in the last months without any explanation). All this caused deterioration of my health, high blood pressure and restless sleep, which according to medical criteria is a mental disorder, and this mental disorder is what the victims, whose denunciations we are imprisoned for, suffer from. These are indisputable facts, i.e. evidence of direct influence from the investigation and SIZO administration.**

**No one pays any attention to it".**

From Vissarion's speech at the Novosibirsk Regional Court on 20.09.21:

**"What are my friends and I serving a year's sentence for, as in essence such imprisonment cannot be anything else?**

**All this long time of thorough investigation, when during this period many hundreds of witnesses were interrogated, I had to get acquainted only with some monstrously ridiculous accusatory fantasies. But in all that time not a single piece of evidence was ever presented to me that could directly show what specific actions I had done wrongfully to someone's detriment?**

**The ridiculousness related to the far-fetched accusation that we had caused grievous harm was particularly evident.**

**During the entire investigation there was not a single witness statement that could prove that any of us had committed illegal acts that could have resulted in serious harm.**

**Then why was I so inhumanely separated from my family, from my young children who particularly needed my presence around them?**

**Is it just because someone has an inadequate accusatory fantasy, and in order to find any evidence of it, imprisonment is necessarily required by the norms of this state?"**

We are also very concerned about a question to which we cannot find a reasonable answer at all.

Two people who once came to the Community have written statements which have been used as key arguments for arrests and detention. These two people are still living in the village, building houses, growing a vegetable garden, they are not going anywhere else and are waiting to be paid what they consider to be due amount of money for the "suffering" that led to their "mental disorder".

It should be noted that "victim" K. confesses that the last time he saw Vissarion was in 2005, 16 years ago. And "victim" M. has never been a believer, as no one has ever seen him in this capacity.

We ask the question: So why had they not been given a full-fledged hospital examination as envisaged for such a case? Attorneys and defendants have repeatedly asked for an objective professional expertise, which could be conducted, for instance, at the Serbsky Institute in Moscow.

**The lawyers and defendants have applied more than once for an objective professional expertise.**

**However, it looks strange that all such applications for a hospital examination of the "victims" are for some reason persistently rejected.**

**It appears that our friends are being held in custody on the basis of charges of causing grievous bodily harm to the "victims", whose injuries have not been confirmed by forensic examination.**

It is not clear to us to what extent such actions are legitimate from a legal point of view and how they should be assessed from the point of view of the norms of simple humanity.

We are also concerned about the seemingly widespread practice which does not allow our case to move forward: if a lawyer writes an appeal to a higher authority about the wrong or inadmissible actions of the investigation, the request to investigate will go down the chain of command until it reaches the very person whose wrongdoing was the subject of the appeal.

In other words, no one will deal with the misconduct of the investigator. It seems to us that this is one of the key points which is preventing the case from moving forward.

### **3. Summary: Questions and requests**

In summary, and in the hope that we can be heard and receive the necessary legal assistance, we have some burning questions and requests.

3.1 We ask for your genuine concern for innocent people, for your help in understanding what happened, and for shedding light on the events surrounding the detention of our Teacher and his two disciples. Since we have appealed many times to various authorities (the administration of the President of the Russian Federation, the regulatory authorities, political parties in Russia, the media, etc.) to no avail, please advise us where else we can appeal in order to move the matter forward.

3.2. Please support our request for a full-fledged independent medical-psychiatric expertise for K. and M., who consider themselves the victims.

3.3. Please also assist us, in view of all the circumstances set forth in this appeal, to achieve, before the end of the trial, a reduction of the measure of restraint for Vissarion, Vadim Redkin and Vladimir Vedernikov to house arrest or, if favourable, a stay in a rented flat in Novosibirsk, where the investigation is being conducted. After all, the fact of being permanently held in those conditions is in itself a serious pressure to break a person. Being in prison conditions is equivalent to conditions that cause serious harm to health. And yet our friends are in these conditions for the second year in total absence of any real grounds for that and contrary to all the relevant recommendations of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation.

3.4. We earnestly request support for our humanly legitimate demand that a full medical examination be conducted as soon as possible, with a report on the state of health of Vissarion, V.

Redkin and V. Vedernikov. This is extremely important after their year-long detention in severe conditions, aggravated by the use of torture, sending them to solitary confinement, all kinds of provocations and psychological pressure.

3.5. We draw your attention to the fact that when there are no outsiders in the courtroom, the process takes place in an open mode, as agreed. However, when an outsider appeared in the courtroom, the question of a closed mode was raised. At the same time, as everyone witnessed, the court relied on facts implying secrecy, but exactly the same facts are already in the public domain in the administrative case in Krasnoyarsk.

In conclusion we would like to say that those who had planned the attack on the Community and the arrest of the Teacher had probably expected a rapid break-up of the Community, with elements of chaos and confusion, simply because the Teacher had been distanced from us.

To achieve the effect of such disintegration is only possible if the activities of a certain community are entirely dependent on one single organiser.

One special characteristic of our communal interaction, however, proved to be unexpected and unconventional for everyone. Despite the isolation of our Teacher, we continue to live and create, and the Community is growing and becoming stronger.

And we wish to all the persecutors enlightenment and spiritual warmth. We would also like to recall the words of biblical Gamaliel, the respected law teacher. His voice still sounds relevant after millenniums: "...depart from these people and leave them; for if this work and this undertaking is of men, then it will collapse, but if it is of God, then you cannot destroy it; beware that you do not become opponents of God" (Acts of the Apostles. 5: 38-39).

03.11.2021

### **Applications:**

1. Evidence of violations of the civil rights of residents of the Kuraginsky district living in the Community.
2. A copy of V. Vedernikov's statement about violence in SIZO-1 in Novosibirsk.
3. V. Redkin's appeal to the ombudsman for human rights.
4. Speech by S. Torop in the Novosibirsk Regional Court on 20.09.21.
5. V. Redkin's speech at the Novosibirsk Regional Court on 20.09.21.
6. Speech of V. Vedernikov in the Novosibirsk Regional Court on 16.09.21.
7. Information about the participation of the followers of the Church of the Last Testament in the socio-economic development of the territories of the Cheremshan village council.
8. Photo of Teacher Vissarion and the Community.
9. Signatures of residents of the Kuraginsky and Karatuz districts of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, other cities in Russia and abroad, who supported this Appeal.

**Additional information about Vissarion, his teachings and the Community  
can be obtained from the links (date of access: 12/01/2021):**

1. Community of Vissarion. Official website in English: <https://vissarion.world>
2. Vissarion. Vissarion's video channel. Series of Q&A meetings: <https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCiyK-eoIH-bUvHXDiS6GDLg>
3. Vissarion. Vissarion's blog. Publication of Vissarion's appeals to people via the Internet: <http://vissarion.name>
4. The Last Testament. Word of Vissarion. Narration from Vadim. Applications for smartphones and PCs: <http://slovo.vissarion.ru>
5. Community of Vissarion. Official website: <https://vissarion.ru>
6. Community of Vissarion. Official website in German: <http://vissarion.info>
7. Community of Vissarion today. Fresh and up-to-date information about what is happening in the Community and the course of trials. Opinions of residents, guests, media and experts. Analysis of accusations and debunking of myths: <https://vissarion.org/>
8. Community of Vissarion. Video channel. Vissarion's answers to various questions. Interview with interesting people: <https://m.youtube.com/channel/UC-sjTGCOoRS6ygjygRM6dFg>
9. Alex Rags. Video channel about life in the Community. Interview with the masters. Holidays. Concerts: <https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCGJNCrfbWkq7h7GYyEaVOsg>
10. Alexander Staroverov. Personal Facebook page of the Community Press Secretary. The most important news about what is happening in the Community. Information and press contacts: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100011210956438>

**Contacts for feedback:**

1. For contact form follow this link: <https://vissarion.world/the-last-testament/#footer>
2. Ekaterina Palkina, Abode of Dawn. International contacts (English) Phone +7 (977) 627-63-39 (MSK +4), Telegram, WhatsApp. E-mail: [Ekaterina.palkina@gmail.com](mailto:Ekaterina.palkina@gmail.com)

3. Alexander Staroverov. Personal Facebook page of the Community Press Secretary. The most important news about what is happening in the Community. Information and contacts with the press: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100011210956438>
4. Phone +7 (902) 950-27-72 (from 9 to 20, Krasnoyarsk, MSK +4), Telegram, WhatsApp. E-mail: [starover@bk.ru](mailto:starover@bk.ru)
5. Stanislav Kazakov, Krasnoyarsk Territory, village Cheremshanka. All questions on the topic Calls Phone +7 (952) 717-96-53 (MSK +4), Telegram, WhatsApp. E-mail: [ystas43@mail.ru](mailto:ystas43@mail.ru)
6. Tamara Roshchina, St. Petersburg. All questions on the topic Appeals. Phone +7 (921) 648-95-44 (MSK), Telegram, WhatsApp. E-mail: [tamara.rosh@yandex.ru](mailto:tamara.rosh@yandex.ru)
7. Sergey Andrianov, Krasnoyarsk Territory, Cheremshanka village. Questions on collecting signatures under the Appeal. Phone +7 (952) 711-89-06 (MSK +4), Telegram. E-mail: [andri\\_asa@mail.ru](mailto:andri_asa@mail.ru)
8. Ivan Baturin, Abode of Dawn. Administrator of the site "Community of Vissarion Today" <https://vissarion.org/>. Phone +7 (922) 108-44-08 (MSK +4), Telegram, WhatsApp. E-mail: [info@vissarion.org](mailto:info@vissarion.org)