

Michael Stevenson
Vice-President (Academic) and Provost
York University
4700 Keele Street
North York
Ontario M3J1P3
Canada

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Dear Sir,

I wish to bring to your attention a situation that, in my view, requires an appropriate response from the international academic community.

In October last year a colleague of mine, Igor Sutyagin, a researcher at the U.S. and Canada Institute in Moscow, was arrested by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB). He has been in jail since then, although the FSB has not filed formal charges against him. It has been announced that the FSB is going to accuse Igor Sutyagin of treason.

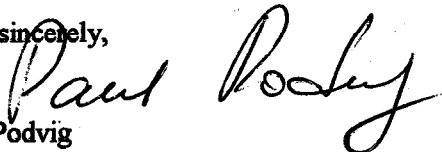
Among various projects Igor Sutyagin worked on was a survey of civil-military relations in Russia that he conducted in 1998–1999. As far as I understand, this work was done as part of a research project that is being administered by York University and Carleton University.

I have learned that the FSB has been interrogating people who were interviewed by Igor Sutyagin as part of that survey. What I find very disturbing here is that the FSB has been telling those people that rather than being an academic study, which it certainly was, the survey was actually carried on the orders of the Canadian Department of National Defence with the implication that it somehow constituted espionage. The FSB seemed to have no regard for either the academic character of the survey nor the fact that the survey was part of an academic program.

Regardless of whether the charges against Igor Sutyagin have any ground (which I believe they do not), I am convinced that the international academic community should not permit any security service to imply that a legitimate and open research project could be a cover for intelligence gathering.

If you should need any further information to help guide your response to this situation, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Pavel Podvig
Researcher, Center for Arms Control Studies
MPTI, 9 Institutski
Dolgoprudny, Russia 141700
Phone/Fax: +7 (095) 408-6381
E-mail: podvig@armscontrol.ru