



Report on the participation of civil society organisations pursuing
expressions of international solidarity through transnational,
international, and regional networks

submitted by OVD-Info

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Introduction

OVD-Info is an independent human rights project aimed at monitoring cases of political persecution in Russia and providing legal assistance to victims of such persecution.¹ Today, OVD-Info operates a 24-hour federal hotline and a Telegram bot to collect information on all types of political persecution and coordinate legal assistance to its victims, provides legal education to activists, researches different kinds of political persecution in Russia, conducts advocacy campaigns and strategic litigation. In 2021, OVD-Info was recognised as a “foreign agent”.

In our report, we analyse the cases of international and regional solidarity using the example of Russia. Russian civil society faces restrictions on international solidarity from both the state and business. Organisations and activists try to overcome difficulties, running various human rights campaigns. They need support from states, businesses, and international and foreign organisations to avoid becoming internationally isolated. Based on the experience of OVD-Info, we have formulated recommendations on what needs to be done to promote international solidarity.

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¹ See the website: <https://ovdinfo.org/>

I. Measures taken by the Russian authorities to discourage international solidarity engagements across borders

1. Many forms of international cooperation in Russia are prohibited, restricted, and stigmatised. One of the main instruments to that effect is a bundle of legislation on “foreign agents”, “undesirable organisations” and the prohibition on cooperating with unregistered international organisations.

A. Legislation on “foreign agents”

2. Organisations and persons cooperating with foreign entities in any form can be declared “foreign agents” for being under “foreign influence” and exercising political activity or other forms of public activity, such as participating in and holding public events and disseminating information. “Foreign influence” is defined in the law as “the provision by a foreign source of support to a person and (or) exerting influence on a person, including through coercion, persuasion and (or) other means”.² Anything is considered support - from money to “organisational and methodological” and other forms of assistance.³ Foreign sources are deemed to be all non-Russian organisations and individuals, as well as Russian intermediaries and other “foreign agents”.
3. The list of activities that is cited by authorities for recognition as a “foreign agent” is broad and, apart from anti-war criticisms, includes protecting LGBTQ+ rights, human rights activities, spreading “inaccurate/negative information about the activities of government agencies” and “attempts to influence decisions of government agencies” and other.⁴ Feasibly, any action of international solidarity can be within the scope.
4. Thus, as of 1 March 2024, 769 individuals, organisations, and groups without a legal entity were recognised as “foreign agents”.⁵ Starting from 2022, the list is being replenished more actively: 110 individuals and projects became “foreign agents” in 2021, in 2022 - 188, and in 2023 - 227, which is two times more than two years ago.⁶
5. These provisions add inevitable risks to any kind of international cooperation and solidarity. “Foreign agent” status is discriminatory and incredibly burdensome, leading many NGOs to dissolution. We know of at least 151 “foreign agent” organisations that have ceased operations. At least 108 of them openly stated that they shut down due to their “foreign agent” designation.⁷

² Art. 1 Federal Law of 14 July 2022 N 255-FZ “On control over the activities of persons under foreign influence”.

³ Ibid., art. 4.

⁴ “Cutting off the oxygen”: how, against the backdrop of war, the authorities are persecuting “foreign agents”, analysis of legislation, OVD-Info, <https://reports.ovd.info/perekryt-kislород-kak-na-fone-voyny-vlasti-presleduyut-inostrannykh-agentov-analiz#3-3>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

6. Additionally, Russia's worst practices are expanding to other countries, including European states, where new laws are being introduced to restrict international cooperation. In March 2023, an attempt was made to pass a law on "foreign agents" in Georgia. A bill on "foreign agents" was introduced, which was worded similarly to the Russian law and was portrayed as such by the public. Eventually, the Georgian law was rejected due to widespread public resistance. More than 80 Russian "foreign agents" appealed to the Georgian Parliament, asking not to adopt the law.⁸

B. Legislation on "undesirable organisations"

7. "Undesirable organisation" is a term that emerged in Russian legislation in 2015. It is used to label specific foreign and international organisations as a threat to the country's constitutional order, defence capabilities and security.⁹ The reasoning behind such designation is often arbitrary.
8. "Participation" in such organisations' activities is prohibited under art. 20.33 of the Code of Administrative Offences (hereinafter - CAO). Repeating the offense leads to criminal prosecution under art. 284.1 of the Criminal Code (hereinafter - CC). As the legal practice demonstrates, charges of "participating", "organising", and "financing" can relate to actions such as making a repost on social media,¹⁰ participating in a roundtable¹¹ or working with an "undesirable" organisation.¹²
9. Initially, the corresponding articles could have only been applied to persons engaging with "undesirable organisations" within Russia's borders, but in 2022, the scope was extended to persecute those who engage with such organisations anywhere.¹³ Combined with a rapidly growing amount of "undesirable organisations", it has led to a broader scope of people impacted by the law on "undesirable organisations".

⁸ Makarevich, Shulman, Dolin, Tolokonnikova and other Russian "foreign agents" asked the Georgian authorities not to adopt the law on "foreign agents", Meduza, 9 March 2023, <https://meduza.io/news/2023/03/09/makarevich-shulman-dolin-tolokonnikova-i-drugie-rossiyskie-inostrannye-agenty-poprosili-vlasti-gruzii-ne-prinimat-zakon-ob-inoagentah>.

⁹ Federal Law of 28 December 2012 N 272-FZ (as amended on 13 June 2023) "On measures against persons involved in violations of fundamental human rights and freedoms, the rights and freedoms of citizens of the Russian Federation".

¹⁰ E.g. case of L. Malyavin, <https://ovd.info/express-news/2019/05/30/v-krasnodare-pensionera-oshtrafovali-za-repost-izobrazheniya-s-simv-olikoy> (available in Russian only), case of A. Pivovarov, <https://en.ovdinfo.org/touch-reality-how-andrei-pivovarov-did-politics-fought-scammers-and-went-jail>.

¹¹ E.g. case of N. Ulitin and S. Yugov, <https://ovd.info/express-news/2023/10/12/dvum-pastoram-pyatidesyatnikam-utverdili-prigovor-tri-s-polovinoj-goda> (available in Russian only).

¹² E.g. case of A. Savelyev, <https://ovd.info/express-news/2021/10/15/v-krasnodare-vozobnovili-delo-o-sotrudnichestve-zhurnalista-s-nezhel-atelnoy>.

¹³ Federal Law of 14 July 2022 N 260-FZ "On amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Russian Federation".

10. So far, the list includes major Russian independent media platforms, a prominent human rights organisation Agora and a variety of international organisations: Greenpeace, Open Society Foundations, Human Rights House Foundation, Article 19, Prague Civil Society Centre, and EU-Russia Civil Society Forum. Academic and research institutions, such as Central European University, German Centre for Central and Eastern European Studies and others, also went under persecution as “undesirable organisations” in 2023. Since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, authorities used this designation to ban initiatives expressing solidarity with Ukraine and opposing Russia’s invasion, such as the Anti-War Committee of Russia and the Russian Action Committee.

C. Other legislative restrictions on engagement with foreign and international organisations

11. Russian law provides for other instruments limiting the scope for international solidarity. It bans participation in the activities of foreign or international non-profit, non-governmental organisations on the territory of Russia that are not registered with Russian authorities. First-time offenders can be prosecuted under art. 19.34.2 of the CAO. Repeat offenders and organisations’ leaders face up to three years in prison under art. 330.3 of the CC. The articles are new and so far have not yet been put into practice.
12. The Criminal Code contains other provisions restricting interaction with international bodies. Thus, according to art. 284.3 of the CC, assisting in the execution of decisions of international organisations, of which Russia is not a member, or foreign state bodies on the criminal prosecution of officials of the Russian Federation, as well as other persons performing military service or serving in volunteer forces, is punishable by up to five years imprisonment. People engaging in “confidential cooperation” with foreign and international organisations face up to 8 years in prison under art. 275.1 of the CC.
13. Hence, laws on “foreign agents”, “undesirable” organisations and other restricting engagement with foreign and international organisations are of the harshest mechanisms aimed at curtailing international cooperation in Russia. The threats provided by the Code of Administrative Offences and the Criminal Code essentially limit the capability and willingness of Russian civil society organisations to cooperate with each other and with foreign and international organisations, imposing a chilling effect on exercising their rights.

II. Restrictions on the use of media, digital and other platforms

14. OVD-Info employs a wide range of media, digital and other platforms, crucial for broadcasting its coverage of human rights violations and expanding its reach to those in need of support in defending their rights. However, in the wake of the Russian

authorities' intensified crackdown on civil society following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, coupled with retaliatory sanctions, Russian civil society organisations found themselves in an exceedingly challenging position.

15. Russian social media and digital platforms were essential ways to engage with the audiences. In 2021, a Russian court ordered, without allowing the representatives to participate in the hearing, to block OVD-Info's website for covering human rights violations and promoting freedom of peaceful assembly.¹⁴ Yandex, a major search engine in Russia, removed the OVD-Info website from its search results.¹⁵ In addition, the Ministry of Justice extrajudicially ordered OVD-Info's new websites to be blocked, citing "foreign agent" legislation.¹⁶
16. Roskomnadzor, Russia's media communications and censorship agency, also demanded that social media block OVD-Info's accounts. OVD-Info petitioned Russian and international companies not to enforce Russia's censorship.¹⁷ VKontakte, Odnoklassniki and Dzen, major Russian social media platforms, blocked OVD-Info's accounts.¹⁸
17. Russian online payment platforms, such as Cloudpayments and YooMoney, refuse to service donations for projects facing censorship, including those whose websites are blocked, or which Russian authorities designated as "foreign agents".¹⁹ When these platforms disconnect civil society organisations, such organisations also lose their recurring supporters base, adversely impacting their long-term viability.
18. International charity platforms are following suit. After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Benevity shut down accounts of Russian and Belarusian non-profit organisations. In January 2024, Russian authorities designated Global Giving, a

¹⁴ OVD-Info's statement on blocking our website, OVD-Info, 25 December 2021,

<https://ovd.info/articles/2021/12/25/zayavlenie-ovd-info-o-blokirovke-nashego-sayta> (available in Russian).

¹⁵ "Yandex" removed the link to "OVD-Info" from the search engine after blocking our resource, OVD-Info, 25 December 2021,

<https://ovd.info/express-news/2021/12/25/yandeks-udalil-iz-poiskovoy-vydachi-ssylku-na-ovd-info-posle-blokirovki> (available in Russian).

¹⁶ Roskomnadzor blocked the websites of OVD-Info, OVD-Info, 7 June 2023,

<https://ovd.info/express-news/2023/06/07/rkn-zablokiroval-sayty-ovd-info> (available in Russian).

¹⁷ "Call for social media. Don't be a censorship tool!", Change.org, 28 December 2021,

<https://www.change.org/p/call-for-social-media-don-t-be-a-censorship-tool>.

¹⁸ "Dzen" blocked the page of OVD-Info at the request of Roskomnadzor, OVD-Info, 4 July 2023,

<https://ovd.info/express-news/2023/07/04/dzen-po-trebovaniyu-roskomnadzora-zablokiroval-stranicu-ovd-info>;

Roskomnadzor blocked the page of OVD-Info in Odnoklassniki, OVD-Info, 25 June 2023,

<https://ovd.info/express-news/2023/06/25/rkn-zablokiroval-stranicu-ovd-info-v-odnoklassnikakh>; OVD-Info's page on VKontakte was blocked in Russia at the request of the Prosecutor General's Office, OVD-Info, 11 August 2022,

<https://ovd.info/express-news/2022/08/11/soobschestvo-ovd-info-vo-vkontakte-zablokirovali-na-territorii-rossii-po> (available in Russian).

¹⁹ Internet blocks as a tool of political censorship, OVD-Info, 7 June 2022,

<https://en.ovdinfo.org/internet-blocks-tool-political-censorship#11>.

charity platform, “undesirable”.²⁰ In response, Global Giving removed Russian projects from the platform, including OVD-Info, without a prior warning, closing one of the few major avenues available to act on international solidarity in reaction to human rights violations in Russia. From that moment on, recurring donations would go to Global Giving instead of OVD-Info, undermining donor intent and trust and further increasing risks for donors.

19. Mailchimp, a direct mail platform, blocked OVD-Info’s account after Russia launched a full-scale aggression against Ukraine.²¹ Mailchimp later said they developed a process to reinstate access to independent news organisations and civil rights groups, which is considered to be a good practice.
20. In December 2023, GoDaddy, one of the biggest domain registrars, notified OVD-Info it would no longer service OVD-Info’s domain names or provide other services. Hetzner, a major hosting provider, also said it would no longer service Russian clients.
21. Canva, a design platform, does not allow Russian NGOs to take advantage of its advanced features on a non-profit plan, limiting the civil society organisations’ ability to communicate solidarity and promote human rights values. Numerous other digital platforms, including OpenAI’s ChatGPT, project management tools Jira and Trello, as well as Grammarly refuse to service clients from Russia, including civil society groups, stifling innovation and limiting efficiency of their human rights work.
22. These decisions are exacerbated by financial sanctions that restrict Russian civil society organisations’ access to online payment platforms such as Stripe.²²

III. Experience of international and interregional solidarity of Russian civil society organisations

23. Even though the Russian authorities impose multiple restrictions on cooperation, Russian civil society organisations exhibit resilience and find avenues for solidarity inside and outside Russia. Examples of such solidarity include the work of OVD-Info in defence of anti-war protesters and protesters of rallies in support of activist Fail Alsynov in Bashkortostan, the campaign appealing against laws on “discrediting the use of Russian armed forces” in the Constitutional Court of Russia, as well as campaigns on establishment and extension of the mandate of the UN Special

²⁰ Three new organisations were added to the Ministry of Justice’s register of “undesirable organisations”, OVD-Info, 29 January 2024, <https://ovd.info/express-news/2024/01/29/v-reestr-nezhelatelnykh-organizatsiy-minyusta-vnesli-tri-novykh-organizatsiy> (available in Russian).

²¹ A Russian opposition leader wants to fight Vladimir Putin with ads on YouTube, CNN Politics, 28 April 2022, <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/04/28/politics/youtube-google-ads-russia-what-matters/index.html>.

²² Impact of sanctions on Russia and Belarus, Stripe Support, 26 May 2023, <https://support.stripe.com/questions/impact-of-sanctions-on-russia-and-belarus>.

Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Russia and empowerment of the UN human rights treaty bodies.

24. Since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, Russians poured into the streets to oppose Russia's war, demand peace, and call for the protection of Ukrainian civilians. Russian authorities cracked down in response, detaining over 19,850 people for their anti-war stance for the period from 24 February 2022 to 22 January 2024.²³ OVD-Info defends the right to express international solidarity on the war in Ukraine: collects information and provides legal consultations through a dedicated hotline and Telegram bot, coordinates pro bono legal representation, and conducts international advocacy and human rights litigation. OVD-Info also conducts research and shares its expertise and technical know-how with civil society worldwide.
25. There is also a compelling need for interregional solidarity inside Russia to tackle gross and systematic human rights violations. OVD-Info provides legal assistance to participants of rallies in Bashkortostan on 15, 17 and 19 January 2024 in support of local activist Fail Alsynov, who had been opposing mining on Bashkir land. As of 1 March 2024, 56 people are criminally prosecuted because of "mass riots" and 52 are detained.²⁴ OVD-Info provides legal assistance to 11 of them. At least 163 protesters are under administrative prosecution.²⁵ OVD-Info provided legal advice on the hotline and media coverage to draw public attention and support victims of human rights violations.²⁶ OVD-Info translated numerous guidelines and manuals into the Bashkir language²⁷ and distributed them via local media outlets. In addition, local lawyers across at least 5 regions of Russia work with OVD-Info and provide legal help to protesters in Bashkortostan. Finally, OVD-Info organised a mass mailing of appeals to the Investigative Committee demanding an investigation into the death of Rifat Dautov, who was detained by the police on a case of "mass riots" and died in unknown circumstances in detention.
26. Members of the Russian civil society solidarise with each other and with the outside world by drawing attention to political prisoners and those politically persecuted. Memorial maintains a list of political prisoners.²⁸ Solidarity events with political

²³ Data on the persecution of protesters in Bashkortostan and other similar persecutions, <https://data.ovd.info/02/02/34-cheloveka-pod-strazhey-iz-za-massovykh-besporyadkov-v-bashkortostane-danny-e-o-dele-i>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ "'Our home is here': On the ground at the Bashkortostan protests", OVD-Info, 26 January 2024, <https://en.ovdinfo.org/baymak>; "'They took my Mom away'. How the Russian authorities persecute protestors in Bashkortostan", OVD-Info, 24 January 2024, <https://en.ovdinfo.org/after-baymak>.

²⁷ Assistance to detainees in Bashkortostan, OVD-Info, <https://ovd.info/content/bashkortostandagy-totkondarga-yarzam> (available in Bashkir and Russian).

²⁸ <https://memopzk.org/>.

prisoners, both Russian and Belarusian, are organised all over the world.²⁹ International and foreign organisations, states, and their representatives have already come out in support of political prisoners such as Alexei Navalny, Vladimir Kara-Murza, Ilya Yashin, Sasha Skochilenko, Alexey Moskalev, Oleg Orlov. They, like many others, still need support. The death of Alexei Navalny showed that being in detention can be torturous and deadly. Therefore, attention to political prisoners, especially those facing torture or health issues, should be promoted even more.

27. Another way to show solidarity is to intervene with amicus curiae briefs in national and international strategic litigation cases. For example, in 2023, OVD-Info, in a coalition with other Russian human rights defenders, submitted more than 20 complaints to the Russian Constitutional Court challenging the law³⁰ prohibiting “discrediting the use of Russian armed forces”.³¹ The Russian authorities widely used this provision to suppress anti-war expression in the context of a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. OVD-Info and other Russian human rights defenders argued that art. 20.3.3 of the CAO violates the Russian Constitution, including freedoms of expression and assembly, prohibitions on state ideology and discrimination.³²
28. The international community has supported the case by submitting four independent amicus curiae briefs to the Russian Constitutional Court.³³ In particular, Article 19, the International Justice Clinic at the University of California and Irvine School of Law submitted one of the amicus curiae briefs, and Lawyers Rights Watch Canada, International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute and Dr. Angelika Nußberger, a professor of law and the director of the Academy for European Human Rights Protection, based at the University of Cologne in Germany, submitted another one. Both amicus curiae briefs focused on the compliance of art. 20.3.3 of the CAO with Russian international obligations. Moreover, Jeffrey Kahn, a professor of law at the Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, along with 27 more prominent U.S. free expression experts, filed an amicus curiae brief, comparing art. 20.3.3 of the CAO with US laws restricting anti-war speech in the past.
29. Even though the Russian Constitutional Court, due to the lack of its independence, rejected all the constitutional complaints filed, and ruled that art. 20.3.3 of the CAO

²⁹ See, for example. <https://adcmemorial.org/novosti/vecher-pisem-politzaklyuchennym-belarusi-i-rossii/>; <https://www.facebook.com/MemorialFr/posts/pfbid036W6Gc1UsU4CtCjpjsNuG2hTs6kMMk5nnrRGFqvaJu28WBaXr9s9k3DcTU3S9oKXgl>; <https://t.me/lettersforfreedom/77>.

³⁰ Art. 20.3.3 of the CAO.

³¹ “John Lennon, the Holy Martyr Alexander Schmorell and others in the Constitutional Court. Cancel the article punishing “discrediting” the Russian army”, OVD-Info, 4 May 2023, <https://en.ovdinfo.org/john-lennon-holy-martyr-alexander-schmorell-and-others-constitutional>.

³² The text of the constitutional complaints, <https://strat.ovd.info/zhaloba-v-konstitucionnyy-sud-na-statyu-2033-koap-rf-o-diskreditacii#1> (available in Russian only).

³³ “International experts supported OVD-Info and a coalition of lawyers in an attempt to repeal the defamation clause. Let's analyze their arguments”, OVD-Info, 23 June 2023, <https://ovd.info/articles/2023/06/23/mezhdunarodnye-eksperty-podderzhali-ovd-info-i-koaliciyu-yuristov-v-popytke> (available in Russian only).

complies with the Russian Constitution,³⁴ such support from civil society organisations did not go unnoticed. Russian and foreign media outlets actively covered this case, bringing information about the so-called anti-war campaign in the Constitutional Court of Russia to a wide audience. It also inspired Russian civil society, showed that they are not alone, helped to form international networks, and strengthened existing connections between experts. Therefore, filing amicus curiae briefs regarding strategic litigation cases should be considered as a good practice for international solidarity action.

30. Furthermore, international solidarity significantly contributed to the creation of the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation. Russian civil society organisations, including OVD-Info, together with INGOs issued several statements,³⁵ published op-eds,³⁶ recorded podcasts,³⁷ and participated in many meetings and events on this matter. This campaign demonstrated to the UN Human Rights Council the need for this mandate in light of years of ongoing human rights violations and political repressions. Consequently, on 7 October 2022, the UN Human Rights Council voted to create this mandate, and on 12 October 2023 to extend it.
31. Another example of international solidarity is the campaign to increase the capacity of the UN human rights treaty bodies. The UN treaty body system has been faced with significant challenges in addressing individual communications for years. However, the problem was exacerbated by Russia's exclusion from the Council of Europe on 16 March 2022. Russian and Belarusian civil society organisations, including OVD-Info, built a coalition and initiated a campaign to increase the capacity of the UN treaty bodies. The campaign resulted in a joint public statement signed by 40 Armenian, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Canadian, Dutch, Georgian, German, Kazakhstani, Kyrgyzstani, Lithuanian, Moldovan, Norwegian, Russian, Tajikistani, Turkmenistani, and international civil society organisations.³⁸ Experts from the

³⁴ "Constitutional Court Discredited. Review of rulings on refusal to consider complaints under the administrative article on "discrediting", OVD-Info, 29 June 2023, <https://strat.ovd.info/diskreditaciya-konstitucionnogo-suda> (available in Russian only).

³⁵ See, for example, "Russian human rights defenders and organisations call on UN Human Rights Council to establish a Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Russia", HRHF, 21 September 2022, <https://humanrightshouse.org/statements/russian-human-rights-defenders-and-organisations-call-on-un-human-rights-council-to-establish-a-special-rapporteur-on-the-situation-of-human-rights-in-russia/>; "Russian civil society calls on EU to lead process to establish Special Rapporteur on Russia at HRC51", HRHF, 29 August 2022, <https://humanrightshouse.org/statements/russian-civil-society-calls-on-eu-to-lead-process-to-establish-special-rapporteur-on-russia-at-hrc51/>;

"Russia: HRC54: Joint letter: Call for the renewal of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation", Amnesty International, 6 September 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur46/7291/2023/en/>.

³⁶ "Russian activists appeal to Africa to take a stand for human rights at UN", Daily Maverick, 28 September 2022, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-09-28-russian-activists-appeal-to-africa-to-take-a-stand-for-human-rights-at-un/>.

³⁷ Inside Geneva podcast, https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/podcast_inside-geneva/45674148.

³⁸ Urgent Need to Reinforce the UN Treaty Bodies. OVD-Info, 23 November 2022. <https://en.ovdinfo.org/urgent-need-reinforce-un-treaty-bodies>.

International Service for Human Rights provided support throughout the campaign. The main demands of the campaign were for additional resources, as well as the establishment of a long-promised effective case management system and more substantive reforms that could eradicate once and for all the problem of the growing backlog of the UN treaty bodies.

IV. Conclusion and recommendations

32. Over the years, Russian authorities have introduced new laws and practices that limit international solidarity efforts. However, despite all the restrictions, Russian civil society continues to be involved in such actions, which often leads to persecution. Analysis of Russia's bad practices should be used for global changes in this area.

33. Therefore, we kindly request the Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity to support our recommendations addressed to various actors, in particular,

to businesses:

- Eliminate practices of refusal to provide services and sell goods to independent civil society organisations, where such practices negatively affect the defence of human rights and international solidarity;
- Refuse to comply with government orders to restrict access to or block websites, accounts in social media and other online resources, if such orders clearly violate human rights;
- Ensure compliance with the Guidance Note on Overcompliance with Unilateral Sanctions and its Harmful Effects on Human Rights developed by the UN Special Rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures,³⁹ as well as to develop other industry-specific and issue-specific guidelines and allocate resources to work on their sanctions compliance and the elimination of practices harmful to the protection of human rights and international solidarity;
- Establish and implement policies that promote unrestricted access of human rights defenders and activists to the services and goods needed for their legitimate activities;

to governments:

- Withdraw repressive laws and eradicate practices that prevent the expression of international solidarity such as laws on “foreign agents”, “undesirable organisations” and others;

³⁹ Guidance Note on Overcompliance with Unilateral Sanctions and its Harmful Effects on Human Rights, the United Nations, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-unilateral-coercive-measures/resources-unilateral-coercive-measures/guidance-note-overcompliance-unilateral-sanctions-and-its-harmful-effects-human-rights>.

- Establish guidelines, principles and programmes that support and promote international solidarity;
- Provide visa and financial support to human rights defenders and activists for co-operation and continuation of their work;
- Strengthen national anti-discrimination laws and adopt and enforce the required specific national laws and regulations prohibiting businesses from refusing to provide services and sell goods to independent civil society organisations, where such practices negatively affect the defence of human rights and international solidarity;

to international organisations:

- Facilitate face-to-face and online meetings for civil society groups and individual activists from different countries, including with UN bodies and states on cross-national issues;
- Strengthen support to organisations in pursuing solidarity through training, seminars, workshops, and consultations;
- Provide civil society organisations with resources or other assistance to engage in international solidarity;
- Support initiatives to develop monitoring platforms on political prisoners' issues;

to all actors:

- Show support for political prisoners and call on states to release them immediately.