

19 April 2017

Professor Oleg Kharkhordin  
Rector  
European University at St. Petersburg

Dear Professor Kharkhordin,

As the Director of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, one of the world's premier institutions studying Eastern Europe, I am writing to share with you our unconditional support for the European University at St Petersburg (EUSP) in the view of the decision taken by the authorities of the Russian Federation to withdraw the teaching license from Your institution. Such a decision will disrupt the work of a great institution of higher learning, its staff and students.

We share with the members of international academic community deep respect for EUSP, as one of the most outstanding institution of higher learning in the Russian Federation, and – indeed – in the whole world. Your manifold contributions to scholarship and teaching are broadly recognized and applauded. It is always a great honour and intellectual feast to work with the EUSP staff or students.

We are deeply disturbed by the actions of the Ministry and are urging the relevant authorities to reconsider their decision. Great accomplishments in research and instruction always come from strong, autonomous institutions of higher learning and research institutes. This was clearly understood even during the Soviet times; the best academic achievements the Soviet Bloc produced came from the most independent institutions. The curtailment of institutional autonomy, including interference with instructional sovereignty, invariably leads to intellectual decline and mediocrity, as the best scholars and students leave for places that guarantee the freedom of intellectual inquiry and political non-interference.

We stand together with the EUSP staff and students in their struggle to preserve the venerable institution's existence and autonomy and we sincerely hope that one of the best Russian research universities will be safe and its regular functioning will not be disrupted.

Yours,



Prof. Jan Kubik  
Director  
UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies

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