

# MPC Social Services

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MPC Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment  
Racially-Motivated Attacks and Harassment in Moscow  
1Q10 Statistics

## I. Introduction

Since 2001 the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy's Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment has interviewed black Africans about racially-motivated attacks and harassment they have experienced in Moscow. Using quarterly reports since the beginning of 2009, the Task Force is seeking to construct a reflection of incidents which minorities encounter while living in Moscow.

## II. Executive Summary

During first quarter of 2010 (herein referred to as "1Q10") the Task Force has recorded the following incidents against Black Africans in Moscow:

- **Eight physical attacks that occurred in the first quarter of 2010** – all eight appear to be racially motivated, four of these attacks occurred on the *Bikova Ramiski* electrishka;
- **Two cases of harassment** - both cases involved death threats with weapons;
- **Three physical attacks that occurred in 2009** – all three appear to be racially motivated;
- **Nine convictions of white supremacists** – given up to 22 years in connection to the murder of a man from Cameroon in 2008;
- **One arrest of suspected white supremacist** - linked to the murder of a Ghanaian man in 2009;
- **One murder of Moscow judge** - in assumed connection to his role in sentencing members of a far-right neo-Nazi group;
- **One recovered body of a missing Zambian student** – although the student went missing after a seemingly racially-motivated altercation, Russian police are suggesting the death was a suicide;
- **One television report on Russia Today warning of a rise in xenophobic attacks**
- **One video profile** – depicting the life of an African in Moscow (produced by Global Post); and
- **Updates on forthcoming Task Force Research**

## III. Summary of Recent Attacks

*\*Please note: the Task Force defines "attack" as a physical assault regardless of whether or not it causes serious lasting injury for the victim.*

On the morning of **Friday 1 January 2010**, a Ghanaian man was waiting at the bus stop of Lydlno. Without warning, he was approached by three young Russian men. They were shouting racist slurs and they began to beat the Ghanaian victim. The police were passing by the area, and the attackers fled when they noticed the police were approaching. The police asked the victim what had happened, but did not take an official report or make any attempt to stop the fleeing attackers. There were other witnesses to the event, but they responded only by watching idly or running away. The victim sustained injuries to his eyes and to his ribs. He believes the attack was motivated by racism due to the language the attackers used and also due to the fact that it was unprovoked.





The victim suffered 15 stab wounds (see photos above) and was hospitalized for three weeks. While he was in the hospital, he was interviewed by the police. The victim believes that the police took an official report, however they failed to give him a copy. The police also confiscated the victim's phone, wallet, and all of his wallet's contents including cash in rubles and US dollars. The police told the victim that they needed these items for investigative purposes, but to date they have not returned the items. Post-attack, the victim continues to suffer from extreme fear and nightmares. He believes that the attack was racially motivated because there was no other reason evident; it was simply an unprovoked attack.

#### IV. Summary of Recent Cases of Harassment

*\*Please note: racially-motivated harassment takes many forms from inappropriate staring to verbal assault and intimidation. Victims rarely report the abuse, but when asked about it they often say they face it daily. When they do report incidents, it is usually because they have found the harassment particularly offensive or embarrassing.*

An African student reported to the Task Force that he was approached by a Russian man while travelling on the red metro line in **early January 2010**. The Russian man held a gun to the victim's head and said that the victim should go back to Africa. He said that he wanted to kill the African man. The metro then arrived at a station, and the attacker ran off.



On **Sunday 21 March 2010**, a Ghanaian man was travelling home with a Nigerian man and another Ghanaian man. The group was approached by a Russian man on the *Bikova Ramiski* electrishka who began asking them for cigarettes. The African men told him that they did not have any. The Russian man left them alone for a few minutes, but then returned to their seats and asked the African men if they could speak Russian. The aggressor asked one of the victims to make room for him on the bench, so the Ghanaian stood up and moved away. The Russian man began speaking Russian to the two African men who stayed on the bench. During this time, the Russian man's wife approached the first victim and told him that her husband was crazy and he should run away. The aggressor called from across the carriage and again asked the victim if he spoke Russian, to which he replied no. The Russian man then left and soon returned with five friends who each had 2 knives - one in each hand. The attackers said that they were going to kill the three African men, so the victims ran out of the electrishka. The Russian men ran after them with their knives, and the African men ran by a police station. The police stopped the attackers, handcuffed them and took them inside. The three victims did not talk to the police to make an official report. The victim feels that the attempted attack was racially motivated.

#### V. Summary of Previous Unreported Physical Attacks

In **2009**, a man from the Ivory Coast was attacked upon his arrival in Moscow. He cannot remember the name of the train station because as the time he "did not even know his right from his left in Moscow." He tried to take a taxi, but needed money so he went to a place to exchange his €4.00 euro into roubles. After he had changed money, he began walking down the street and two Russian men approached him and said, "Let us help you with your bag." The victim declined and tried to keep walking, but the Russian men then attacked him, hitting him several times and injuring his mouth. Witnesses to the event scared the attackers away. As the attackers were leaving, they shouted racial slurs at the victim. The victim believes that the attack was motivated by racism because the attackers chose him as a victim instead of the many other people in the area.



On **Wednesday 9 December 2009**, a man from the Ivory Coast was sent to a Refugee Camp in the Perm Region, west of Moscow. In general, he has complained that the conditions are very terrible. Inhabitants of the refugee camp live in small wooden houses that are very cold, and the food and clothing are terrible. There is no place to work or anything to do except be cold. The camp is 200 km from the city of Perm. There is a small village near the camp, but there are no jobs available there. There are seven African

refugees in the camp and when they go into the village near the camp, these African refugees are constantly harassed. The local village residents always try to get the refugees to buy them a drink, and if they refuse, the refugees are regularly beaten.

The complainant said that there is one older man from Ivory Coast who is constantly attacked even though he always fights back. One particular night, a group of three local men began to harass the victim while walking by. One of the men appeared to have been drinking, but the other two appeared to be sober. They were shouting many racial slurs including “*black monkey*.” They dragged and twisted the victim until an older woman witnessed the harassment and instructed them to stop. The victim suffered injuries on his right forearm from being knocked down, injured a finger on his left hand, and bled all over his clothing. He did not go to the hospital because he did not have money for the clinic. He did not contact the police because he did not think he would be able to identify his attackers. He also said that he would definitely prefer to live in Moscow instead of the refugee camp in the Perm Region. However, now that he is registered as a refugee, he must live at the camp and is not free to live and work in Moscow.



Earlier in **2009**, an African man was returning to Zvenidogod (the city of his employment) from Moscow. Upon his arrival, he met a group of colleagues talking including a two Ukrainians and a few fellow Africans. They began chatting and then the Ukrainians began telling racist jokes and using racial slurs, but the victim said that he didn't want to talk to them anymore if they continued using language like that. Upon hearing this, one of the Ukrainians left and then returned with two more Ukrainians, and the four Ukrainians then began to hit the victim, attacking him with a knife. His friends called the police and the fight was stopped. The victim was taken to a hospital where he was treated for a stab wound in his right shoulder. The police did not make an official report and told the victim that they would hold the attackers overnight, but then release them the next day. The victim continues to suffer shoulder pain a month after the attack. He believes that the attack was racially motivated because of the language used.

## VI. Related Events

In **Friday 5 March 2010**, a 17-year old student from St. Petersburg was arrested in connection to the murder of a 25-year old man from Ghana. Video footage has surfaced of the victim being attacked by Russian youths, sustaining nearly 40 stab wounds to his head, neck, chest, abdomen and extremities. He died while in intensive care at a nearby hospital soon after the attack. Two other Russian youths (ages 19 and 20) have already been arrested in connection to the murder; both are known members of the National Socialism White Power group. For more information, please see attached article: <http://www.fontanka.ru/2010/03/05/108/>

On **Thursday 11 March 2010**, nine members of a Russian white supremacists group were jailed for up to 22 years in connection with the killing of a man from Cameroon who was stabbed repeatedly and had his throat slit on his way back from work as a DJ in 2008. Three of the men were known members of the white supremacists group Simbirsk White Power, and were convicted of the racially motivated murder in Etizok Ndobe Ernest in the city of Ulyanovsk. For more information, please see attached article: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8563503.stm>

On **Sunday 4 April 2010**, police in Kazan (Tatarstan) recovered the body of a 21-year old male Zambian student in Kazanka River. The student from Kazan State Power University, identified as Lance Mate, went missing shortly after leaving a club in Kazan after a physical altercation caught on CCTV cameras with Russian natives in November 2009. The victim is believed to have been murdered, but local police claim that it could also be a case of suicide. For more information, please see attached article: [http://www.postzambia.com/post-read\\_article.php?articleId=7882](http://www.postzambia.com/post-read_article.php?articleId=7882)

On **Monday 12 April 2010**, Eduard Chuvashov, a leading Moscow City Court judge, was shot dead leaving his apartment in central Moscow in what may be an assassination linked to his role in sentencing members of a far-right neo-Nazi group. In February 2010, Chuvashov sentenced nine members of the White Wolves, an ultranationalist skinhead gang, up to 23 years in connection to 11 racially-motivated murders. For more information, please see attached article: <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/ultranationalist-link-seen-in-judges-killing/403787.html>

## VII. Related Media Links

Below is a poignant video clip of a recent profile produced by Global Post on the life of an African migrant in Russia who is also a recipient of support from MPC Social Services and the Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment:

<http://www.globalpost.com/video/commerce/100223/african-diaspora-russia>

Below is a link to a report produced by Russia Today. The report discusses the severity and large number of attacks that occurred in early January. Reverend Bob Bronkema of MPC was interviewed in this report.

<http://rt.com/prime-time/2010-01-18/activists-warn-xenophobia-surge.html?fullstory>

## VIII. Additional Information

In **February 2010**, the Task Force attempted to conduct a survey of biracial children living in Russia. Our goal was to determine if (and if so, to what extent) biracial children face discrimination. However, responses to the survey were sporadic. At this time, the Task Force does not feel that it has the resources to properly conduct an effective and accurate survey. Thus, further research has been postponed, but the Task Force hopes to continue this project at some point in the near future.

Additionally, the Task Force began conducting a survey in **April 2010** on the perceptions and experiences of race-relations of minorities living in Moscow. This project is an update of a Task Force research conducted in spring 2002 and 2009 which profiled the perceptions and experiences of people of color living in Moscow. The survey will provide a snapshot of how the quality of life for minorities has improved or worsened in the last seven years. Research is slated to be conducted over the next six months, with a tentative publish date scheduled for September 2010. If you or anyone you know would like to take part, please contact us directly.

And finally, the Task Force is working to make our report more comprehensive. Our goal is to compile the details about attacks that are reported to other organizations into a single report so that we can present a more accurate reflection of the scope of racially-motivated attacks and harassment incidents. If your organization receives any reports of such incidents and you are willing to allow us to include some details in our report, please contact us. We will maintain the privacy of your organization and of the victims.

## Contact Information

For further information on this report or to become involved with MPC's Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment, please contact:

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