

MPC Social Services

Lomonosovsky Prospect, 38, kv. 59/60
117330 Moscow Russia

MPC Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment Racially-Motivated Attacks and Harassment in Moscow **4th Quarter 2010 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 fourth quarter of 2010 (herein referred to as "4Q10") the Task Force has recorded the following incidents against Black Africans in Moscow:

- **4 physical attacks that occurred in the 4Q10** – all four appear to be racially motivated
- **1 sexual attack** – committed at knife & gunpoint against a 15 year old girl from the Congo
- **2 ultra-nationalists sentenced to prison for racist murders** – convicted of 15 murders between October 2008 and May 2009
- **A summary of the race riots that occurred on 11th December** – which resulted in many racial attacks and physical injuries
- **3 non-fatal racially motivated shootings in the wake of race riots** – evidence of escalating racial tension
- **1 fatal stabbing of a Kyrgyz man** – a 14 year old boy confessed to the murder
- **1 beating of a Russian Human Rights Activist** – suspected to have been targeted for his work with refugees, foreigners and labor migrants.

III. Summary of Recent Physical 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.*

Attack 1:

On the evening of **Wednesday 20 October** a racial attack was perpetrated against a Nigerian man in Taganskaya. The victim was passing through Taganskaya at around 7pm when he was stopped by a Russian man who began speaking to him in Russian. The victim does not understand Russian so could not engage in conversation with the other man. The victim decided to keep walking. However, he was immediately stopped again by 3 other men, who the victim said were all in their late 20's. Before he knew what was happening another man came at him from behind and broke a bottle over his head. The attackers then used the broken bottle to stab the victim's head, causing him fall to the ground. At this point the attackers fled the scene. Another Russian man who had witnessed the attack called 03 and waited with the victim until the Ambulance arrived. The victim said he doesn't remember when the Ambulance arrived, he only woke up and found himself in the hospital. He received treatment for his injuries at the hospital, including stitches to his head. The victim did not report the attack to the police. The victim believes the attack was racially motivated as he did not know the attackers, did nothing to provoke the attack and the attackers did not steal anything from him.

Attack 2:

A second racially motivated attack took place on **Saturday 12 December**. The victim, a 40-year-old male from the DRC, was sitting with a few friends at a café in Moscow's Okhotny Ryad mall. At around 4pm the victim and his friends were approached by a group of about 7 Russians who began yelling out phrases like "Monkeys, what are you doing here? This is not your country". The victim, who speaks Russian, responded asking the Russians "is there a problem"? The Russians then flipped over the table the victim and his friends were sitting at. Another Russian grabbed a chair and threw it at the victims. The group of Russian attackers, which had started out being just several people, quickly grew into a very large mob. The victim believes there were eventually at least 100 people, including both men and women. Some of the attackers were carrying bottles as weapons. The victim attempted to flee the scene, but as he was doing so, was sprayed with pepper spray by an attacker. The victim managed to keep going and leave the mall by going into the metro. He saw a police officer and ran towards him to ask for help. As the victim was talking to the police officer there were Russians still physically attacking him. The police officer was unable to stop the attack, as there were simply too many people. The police officer left, but soon returned with another 6 police officers. The police then managed to push the attackers away from the victim. The police officers advised the victim to leave the area as quickly as possible. The victim said there were hundreds of witnesses but they did nothing to try to stop the attackers. Some of the witnesses were even taking photos and videos. The victim did not seek any medical help and did not make an official police report, as he believes the police would just "tear it up".

Attack 3:

MPC received a report of a third racially motivated attack that took place on **Saturday 12 December**. The victim, a 29-year-old male from the DRC was eating lunch with some African friends at a café in the Okhotny Ryad mall at around 4pm. The victim and his friends, who included some women, saw a group of several Russian men harassing and attacking some people of Caucasian decent. When the attackers saw the victim and his African friends in the café they turned their attention onto them. The attackers approached the group and began yelling out derogatory racial slurs, such as "niggers" and "monkeys". The attackers screamed at the victims asking "why are you here? Russia is for Russians", and telling them to "go back to your country". The attackers then began physically beating the victim and his friends with their fists, chairs from the café and weapons. There were soon numerous attackers, who took it in turns to beat the victim and his friends. The victim believes there were over 100 attackers who were predominantly in their 20's and 30's, and some of them had weapons such as bottles and even knives. The victims suffered a constant onslaught of beatings that continued for around 15 minutes. The victim noticed that some of the café's patrons, who had previously been sitting quietly at the café, were egging the attackers on and some even joined in the attack. There were many other witnesses who stood by and did nothing to help the victims. The victim only noticed one police officer yell "stop, stop"! But the attackers ignored his instructions. Eventually the victim and one friend managed to get out of the mall. However, when they got outside they saw a huge mob of what looked like thousands of people yelling and protesting. So they ran back into the mall and tried to get to the Metro. When they got there they saw a couple of police officers whom they approached and asked for help. The police advised the victims to get away from the area but not to use the Metro as it was too dangerous. The police officers then escorted the victims to the street and told them to get in a taxi to escape the scene. The victim sustained a sore shoulder and knee in the attack, as well as a cut on his chest. He sought medical treatment at MPC's medical clinic on the Thursday after the attack. The victim lost his jacket and his camera during the attack. He did not make a police report on the day because he thought it was too dangerous. In addition, he doesn't speak much Russian and is generally afraid of the police.

Attack 4:

A fourth racially motivated attack took place in the afternoon of **Monday 20 December**. The victim, a 35-year-old male from Cameroon, was sitting in a café with a friend in Vykhino on Monday 20th December. Two Russian men in their mid-Twenties approached the victim and

asked him to go outside with them. The victim reluctantly agreed, not wanting to create any cause for conflict. Once outside, the attackers asked the victim for money but the victim told them he did not have any. The victim was then hit from behind, which caused him to fall down into the snow. The attackers began violently kicking the victim and stomping on his face. During the attack they were yelling racist slurs, such as "monkey". A witness called the police who soon arrived and stopped the attack. They also managed to apprehend one of the two attackers, however the other one escaped. The police then called an ambulance, which took the victim to hospital. The victim suffered a broken jaw in the attack. The hospital repositioned the victims jaw, carried out dental work and provided the victim with painkillers. The victim did make an official police report. He was asked by police to identify the attacker they apprehended, which he did. The police asked the victim to return for a follow up. In the meantime they took possession of the victim's phone, promising to give it back when he returned for the follow up.

IV. Summary of recent sexual attack

The MPC Taskforce has recorded a serious crime committed against a 15 year old girl and her older brother, both from the Congo. It is not immediately obvious whether racism was the motivation for this attack. It appears more likely the attackers simply took advantage of the extreme vulnerability of the victims. However, due to the extreme seriousness of the crime we feel it must be reported.

The victims, a 15-year-old girl and her 20-year-old brother, had just arrived in Moscow on Saturday 6th November. Fleeing political persecution in the Congo, the pair had paid a trafficker to take them to Finland. However, the trafficker had deceived them and abandoned them at Moscow airport. At around 8pm on Sunday 7th November the pair met a Russian man at the airport who spoke some English. After hearing their story the Russian offered to take them to his house in Moscow until they could contact their Embassy. They stayed there for 2 nights without issue. But on the 3rd evening, Tuesday 9th November at 10.30pm, the Russian man received 3 friends, who proceeded to consume large quantities of vodka. At around 1am (**Wednesday 10th November**) all 4 Russian men started harassing and threatening the victims. One of the attackers then took out a gun with a silencer and pointed it at the victims. The other 3 attackers took out knives. The man with the gun then held the gun to the male victim's head and forced him to crouch on the floor with his hands on his head. The other three attackers then proceeded to rape the 15 year old girl. The attack continued for around 2 hours. At around 3am the attackers forced the victims into a car and drove them to an unknown location where they dumped them by the roadside. Before leaving, the attackers stole all the money the victim's possessed, a sum of US\$2,000.

V. Related Events

On **Thursday 28th October 2010**, a Moscow court handed down long prison sentences to two ultranationalists convicted of carrying out 15 racially motivated murders. The murders, which took place between October 2007 and May 2008 in the Moscow region, were carried out "on grounds of racial and national hatred" according to the Court. The convicted men were 22-year-old Moscow student Vasily Krivets who was sentenced to life in prison and ordered to pay 13 million roubles to the families of the 15 victims, and 23-year-old unemployed Dmitry Uflimtsev from Volgodonsk, who was sentenced to 22 years.

Source: Reuters <http://www.reuters.com/article/email/idUSTRE69R4ZY20101028>

On **Saturday 11th December**, a violent demonstration erupted in central Moscow and a number of racially motivated attacks resulted. The demonstrations originated as a memorial rally organized in Moscow's Menezh square in support of Yegor Sviridov, a 28-year-old Spartak Football Club fan who was shot dead the previous week during a mass brawl. Those suspected of his murder were reportedly young men from the North Caucasus region. Anger

at Sviridov's death amongst Spartak Football fans was fuelled by a police decision to release the main suspects of the murder. Spartak fans organized a rally on Wednesday 8th December to demand police re-arrest the suspects and investigate Sviridov's murder. Whilst beginning peacefully, the memorial rally organized for Saturday 11th December soon escalated into a violent demonstration involving several thousand people who clashed with riot police and attacked people of non-Slavic appearance, including Africans and people from the Caucasus region. Rioters were chanting slogans such as "Russia for Russians" and "Moscow is a Russian city". Dozens of people were reportedly injured and many arrests were made. Police attempted to disperse the crowds by pushing the demonstrators underground into the Metro system. However, the crowds continued attacking anyone of non-Slavic appearance and clashing with riot police.

Below is a graphic video from the riots (please be aware this video contains some disturbing images):

<http://www.lifenews.ru/news/46270>

Local Russian media picked up on the racial tension involved and quickly began describing the events as the "Moscow race riots". However, Western media predominantly reported the events as football violence. See some Western Media reports below:

BBC reported: "*Russia: Spartak Moscow fans clash with police*"

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11976792>

CNN reported: "*Soccer fans clash with police in Moscow*"

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/europe/12/12/russia.soccer.violence/?hpt=Sbin>

Al Jazeera reported: "*Soccer riots cloud Russia as host*"

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/europe/2010/12/201012129944616603.html>

Bloomberg reported: "*Russian President Medvedev backs police action to quell football fan riots*"

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-12/medvedev-backs-police-action-to-quell-football-fan-riots.html>

In the wake of the violence seen on Saturday 11th December, several racially motivated violent incidents were reported. Arguably one of the most shocking incidents occurred late on the evening of **Sunday 12th December**. Two Russian women reportedly shot a migrant worker in a 24-hour grocery store in a suburb south of Moscow. The attack was not fatal, as it was carried out using a gun with rubber bullets. However, it left the victim with serious neck and chest injuries. No robbery was reported, leading to the conclusion the attack was racially motivated.

Retaliatory attacks carried out by citizens from the Caucasus regions were also reported. The RIA Novosti news agency quotes a police source as saying a number of attacks were carried out against Russian citizens by Dagastani nationals. For example, several Dagastani students reportedly fired a weapon with rubber bullets at a Muscovite near Gorky Park, injuring the victim. A similar attack occurred in the early hours of Friday 17th December when three people, who were walking in the south of Moscow, were fired upon allegedly from a car with Dagastani number plates. The weapon again contained rubber bullets.

Source: Ria Novosti

On **Sunday 12th December**, a day after the "Moscow race riots" in Menezh square, a Kyrgyz man was stabbed to death in Moscow. The main suspect, a 14-year-old boy, has been arrested and is being investigated for the crime along with two other teenager boys. The Interfax news agency quotes a security source as saying "the 14-year-old suspect has

already confessed to the crime". The source also reported all three boys are members of the Spartak Moscow fan group and are involved in a far-right extremist movement.

Source: Times Live <http://www.timeslive.co.za/world/article818699.ece/Boy-14-suspected-of-Moscow-racist-murder>

On **Tuesday 14th December** a Russian human rights activist was reportedly beaten by two unknown men, which left him with a concussion and other minor injuries. The attack occurred in the village of Selyatino, near Moscow. The victim, Yevgeny Bobrov, is head of the Voskhod (Sunrise) human rights organization, which focuses on helping foreigners, refugees and labor migrants in Moscow and it's surrounding regions.

Source: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
http://www.rferl.org/content/human_rights_activist_attacked_/2249131.html

If you would like to discuss the work of the MPC Taskforce on Racial Violence and Harassment, please contact mpctaskforce@gmail.com