



AZAT MIFTAKHOV DAY
JUNE 16, 2021

ORGANIZED BY THE AZAT MIFTAKHOV
COMMITTEE AND THE FRENCH
MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY



CONCLUSION

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It's an honor to give these closing remarks on behalf of the Azat Miftakhov Committee. First, I'd like to thank all the speakers. We've heard a great deal of very interesting mathematics today. I personally learned certainly something and I hope the rest of you did too. I'd also like to thank the contributors who provided contributions to the video that we saw and who provided messages of support for Azat. I'd like to thank all the participants who participated both via Zoom and who watched the conference via live-streaming on YouTube. I also want to acknowledge and thank the various scientific, mathematical societies, and other organizations who helped publicize this event on their websites and in other ways. That was very helpful. There are many people who made this event possible, who worked very hard to organize it. Among the members of our committee I do want to mention Professor Chandler Davis who is himself a former political prisoner. He was, in a very early version of this event, supposed to be one of the speakers, but, unfortunately, he had a serious health event. He is now recovering and our best wishes go to him. He did provide a written message that we saw in that video.

This event has been organized by the mathematical community outside of Russia but, of course, we should remember Azat's supporters, both mathematicians and non-mathematicians who are now inside of Russia. We do remember them. There are many Azat's supporters in Russia and they are the ones who are facing real danger, and our thoughts go to them as well.

And we should not lose sight of why we are here in the first place, which is because of Azat, because of the fact that he has been unjustly prosecuted and imprisoned, and now he is facing a probably imminent transfer to a prison colony after the June 9 appeals court hearing that was mentioned here earlier.

We live in a world where there is a lot of noise, a lot of shouting and it's fairly hard to recognize and tell apart real outrages from imagined ones, but I think we should still try. It's important to make an attempt, because as mathematicians, as scientists and scholars we are citizens of the world, we are citizens of the global mathematical community and not just of the countries whose passports we hold. I think we have an obligation to speak up for our colleagues who are oppressed and unjustly prosecuted, when that happens, and we have an obligation to try to help them.

For me, at least, personally, the fight for justice always begins and ends with trying to help a specific person, not thousands or millions of people, but one person whose human rights and freedoms are being abused. A person like our colleague Azat Miftakhov, currently in a Russian prison, who faces probably darker days of being transferred to a prison colony.

I hope that today's event has been a success, at least in a certain sense, and usually, after a successful mathematical conference there is a discussion about organizing another one next year and maybe even making it an annual event. In this case I hope we will not have to do that. I hope it will not become necessary because I certainly hope that a year from now Azat will be free. But if that turns out not to be the case, if it turns out that we do need to have another one of these events a year from now, we will do that. The main message that I want to deliver from the Azat Miftakhov Committee is that we will not give up the fight, we will persevere, we will continue to press for Azat's release and we will do that until he is freed. And I hope we can count on your support as well.

With that I'd like to thank you again and to bring today's Azat Miftakhov Day to a close. Thank you very much.