

**COUNSEL FOR IMPRISONED RUSSIAN CITIZEN ALEXEY PICHUGIN FILES  
PETITION WITH UN WORKING GROUP ON ARBITRARY DETENTION**

WASHINGTON & GENEVA--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--Perseus Strategies, LLC announced today that Jared Genser, the firm's Managing Director, has joined the international legal defense team for Russian citizen Alexey Pichugin. Described by the *New York Times* as "The Extractor" for his work freeing political prisoners, Mr. Genser has previously represented such clients as former Czech Republic President Václav Havel and Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Aung San Suu Kyi, Liu Xiaobo, Desmond Tutu, and Elie Wiesel.

Earlier, Mr. Genser filed a [petition](#) to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention asking it to find Pichugin's deprivation of liberty arbitrary and in violation of international law.

"I am honored to join Alexey Pichugin's defense team," said Mr. Genser. "As Russia's longest serving political prisoner, Alexey is a casualty of President Vladimir Putin's concerted campaign to crush human rights in Russia and accumulate all political and financial power for himself. Alexey's case demonstrates that without the willingness of the international community to hold him to account, Putin will continue to flout international legal standards and norms with impunity."

At the time of his arrest in 2003, Pichugin worked as a mid-level security manager at Yukos, Mikhail Khodorkovsky's company. "This thin connection to Putin's real enemies was enough to destroy Pichugin's life," said Mr. Genser. Early in the morning on June 19, 2003, nearly two dozen armed security officials showed up on Pichugin's doorstep. They arrested him without a warrant, taking him to a detention center where he was interrogated repeatedly without a lawyer.

"Later, he was denied access to the 'evidence' against him, held in extended pre-trial, and denied the time and resources to prepare an adequate defense," said Mr. Genser.

"The case against Pichugin was a total sham," said Mr. Genser. "At trial, the prosecution offered no physical evidence linking him to the crimes and the witnesses who testified against him offered hearsay evidence and later recanted their testimonies."

Nevertheless, Pichugin was convicted and sentenced to 20 years in prison. Months later, Pichugin was charged with additional counts of murder, put through a second trial, and sentenced to life in prison.

Previously, the European Court of Human Rights has twice ruled that Pichugin's detentions are in violation of international law. The [Parliamentary Assembly](#) of the Council of Europe issued a resolution addressing Pichugin's case, among others, and labeled it "a clear case of non-conformity with the rule of law." And he has attracted support from prominent NGOs [Memorial Human Rights Center](#) and [Freedom House](#), which have both have called Pichugin a political prisoner, and the [Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights](#), which has labeled him a prisoner of conscience.

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention is an independent and impartial body consisting of five members appointed by the UN Human Rights Council. The members are currently from Australia, Benin, Latvia, Mexico, and South Korea. The Working Group has the authority to investigate and issue legal opinions about alleged cases of arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

An op-ed by Mr. Genser published today in The Hill can be read [here](#).

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