



## Dear Russia,

Thousands of people protest against last year's elections in Russia. The government wants to tear down these protests and the protesters courage. But a change is necessary and not to be avoided.

When I think of Russia and its people, I think of true honesty, of welcomeness, of something so incredibly friendly, so selfless and something so – I do not even know how to call it, but I guess it is – something incredibly real, something true and straight.

When I used to think about my friends there and when I used to think about the time I'd spent there, I smiled, I thought of something good.

Now... I am worried.

I see this so amazingly moving country, this so unbelievably changing mood. I see this people on street. I see them shouting out loud. I see them fighting for truth, for democracy, for future and change. I see people, who are sick of lies.

My friend Arthur from Russia was outraged. „I do not know a single person around me who voted for the party United Russia“, he couldn't believe the result of the pre-election.

Russia's people want change. Arthur is a young, handsome and intelligent Russian, he goes to university. Arthur is one of these people who go protesting on street. Arthur is one of these people who think. And he is sick of lies. He calls it a „duty“ to stop these lies.

But then... I am worried. I see this government, this man Vladimir Putin. I recognize no change. No change at all. They want to stop the protests with brutal violence. With violence and even more lies the Russian government wants to silence their people.

This scares me and makes me wonder how could something like that happened to this fascinating country? This country which raised up the certainly most impressing and intelligent authors and thinkers of all times.

„Anything is better than lies and deceit“, this is what already Tolstoy said, one of these amazing thinkers. And I ask myself why isn't this nation developing? This nation with all its abilities. But it is clear, Putin forces it to go backwards.

They call Russia a democracy. A lie, again. Putin was at the very top and he was the very only one who made decisions and he most certainly will be the one only man at the top again. There is no free press which could control their politics, there is no democratic constitution.

That he just increased the presidential term, should be suspicious to the people, thinks Arthur. „I do not like his policy of decay, and stagnation“.

When I see people like Arthur and all these others, this huge generation of people who want change, this huge amount of angry people who are tired of the whole system, I think Russia just must change. And it will. I do not see another way. And I ask, how can Putin destroy all this. How can he just close his eyes, while the intellectuals of his country and the whole future of his country go on the streets to protest against all of his politics?

And I am afraid of the consequences. What if he really kills all of this faith and courage...

Arthur isn't sure how it will go on. He hopes that his country will become free from corruption and lies. Arthur hasn't lost his courage and hope.

Dear Russia, don't lose the power to stand up. Please don't lose courage and hope. You are full of abilities and chances. You have so many very intelligent people, your people wrote some of the best pieces of literatur and art, your language is profound and beautiful, your culture is as multifacted, so as your people. And the wide beauty of your landscape is impossible to describe.



Yours sincerely,

a true lover of your beauty, your culture, your art, your language and your people.

(Text: Miriam Gräf)