



# MPC Social Services

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## Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment 2012 Annual Report

### About Us

The Racial Task Force was established by MPC members in 2001 in response to pervasive racism and xenophobia in Moscow. Originally formed to document racially-motivated violence, the Racial Task Force's current objectives are to provide care and attention for ethnic minority victims of racially-motivated attacks, to raise awareness about racism and corresponding violence within the local, national, and international community and governing bodies, and to advocate on behalf of and seek avenues of justice for ethnic minorities in Moscow. It works primarily with the African community, but seeks to work with all people affected by racially-motivated violence and harassment.

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## Introduction

Since 2001, the Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy's Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment has interviewed people of color about racially-motivated attacks and harassment they have experienced in Russia. After a lull in reporting in 2011, the Task Force has resumed its work and efforts to interview victims and reach out to potential victims.

In its collection of reports, the Task Force works mainly with the African community but documents all cases of physical attacks or harassment reported to it and determines their motive on a case by case basis. The Task Force defines *attack* as a physical assault regardless of whether or not it causes serious lasting injury to the victim. 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 say they can often face it daily. When they do report incidents, it is usually because they have found the harassment particularly offensive or embarrassing.

Using the information we have, the Task Force seeks to construct a reflection of incidents which people of color encounter while living in Russia. In our reports, we make a conscious effort to remain neutral and communicate what has been described to us in the interview in order to provide a balanced portrayal of life for people of color in Russia. We will report stories about both positive and negative experiences migrants have had in Russia. Thus, experiences with a positive outcome are just as important to report as those with negative outcomes.

Lastly, we would like to note that all names are changed in the report for the safety of the victims, but all other information including country of origin, age, etc. are accurate.

## Summary of Racial Violence and Harassment

In 2012, the Task Force recorded the following incidents:

### 16 physical attacks:

- 12 racially-motivated physical attacks
- 2 suspected racially-motivated physical attack
- 1 physical attack of unidentified motivation
- 1 physical attack of unidentified motivation resulting in death

### 9 cases of harassment:

- 7 harassment cases
- 1 police harassment case
- 1 financially-motivated case of police harassment

### A. Physical Attacks

**On the morning of 1 January**, a 37-year-old Nigerian man named Peter was approached while on his way home by a group of about six drunk Russian men between the ages of 20 and 25 for cigarettes. He told them that he did not have cigarettes because he does not smoke and they replied, “Why?” Peter continued walking, knowing they had only approached him asking for cigarettes as a way to start trouble, when they proceeded to chase him. One of them hit him from behind and they all began kicking him, shouting racist slurs such as “black face” and “monkey.” Many of the attackers had on very heavy winter boots, and one managed to hit him in the eye and knocked him unconscious. When he awoke, he found himself at a hospital and discovered all of his things had been stolen from him while he was unconscious, including his two cell phones, documents and passport. There were no other victims of the attack nor were there any witness accounts.

As a result of the attack, Peter sustained a severe injury to his eye and knee and suffered a concussion. He received medical care at a hospital and follow-up care at the MPC Medical Clinic and has fully recovered since the attack.

The attack was reported to the police nine days after the event. The victim had a positive experience reporting to the police, although he believes this is because he personally knows the officer to whom he reported. He requested that no investigation into the attack be started because he feels it is a cumbersome process and believes it will lead to no results in the end.

This is roughly the fourth physical attack the victim has suffered during his 10 years in Russia.

**On the evening of 6-10 February**, a 42-year-old man named Eduard from the Democratic Republic of Congo got on the train as usual to return home. He went to one of the last wagons and was standing in the corner by himself. At the train stop “Butovo,” about three to four Russian men around 25-30-years-old boarded the train and said “look, a black, a n\*\*\*\*\*,” followed by “davai” (let’s go). As he turned around to see who had said this, he was struck in the face by one of the men and was quite taken aback. But, before he could say anything, the other men in the group came to get the guy and they all left together. He was unsure what he had done to get punched and felt very confused. There were no other victims of the attack, and it is unclear if anyone witnessed the event. One individual came to the place where he was standing on the train, but offered no assistance.

As a result of the attack, he sustained injuries to his eye, lip, and leg. He did not seek medical attention immediately after the attack due to a lack of means and documentation. However, he received medical care at MPC Medical Clinic shortly after the event. He is now fully recovered.

He did not make a report to the police due to the language barrier, the belief that the police would not help him because he is a foreigner, and the fear that they would ask for his documentation.

This is the second physical attack the victim has suffered during his three-year stay in Russia.

**In the afternoon of 18 February**, a Nigerian man named Mike was working near the Preobrazhenskaya Ploshchad metro station putting up flyers. Upon entering the first building, Mike was told by a 25-30-year-old Russian man that he should leave. So, to avoid conflict, he left the building while the man continued to watch him. Mike proceeded to enter the building through the next entrance to continue his work. Immediately after exiting the building from the second entrance, he was attacked by the man from the first entrance who was now accompanied by another individual. They attacked Mike by spraying him with gasoline in his eyes and at his head while yelling out racist slurs including “Amerikanskii n\*\*\*\*\*” in Russian. He protected himself from the attack by covering his face and he eventually managed to get away and ran far away from the attackers, who did not follow him. There were no other victims in the attack, but there were witnesses watching from afar who did not respond to the attack.

As a result of the attack, he suffered from skin pain and irritation on his neck, face and head due to the gasoline sprayed on him. He did not seek medical attention because he did not feel his injuries were very severe. He has recovered from the attack.

He did not report the incident to the police because he was afraid of them and worried they would ask for documentation. During his interview with the RTF, he discussed a situation that may have prompted this uneasy feeling towards the police. The situation went as follows: after finishing his work for the day (putting up flyers in apartment buildings), he was chased down by a couple of Russian men who were yelling that they were going to beat him up. He eventually came upon a few policemen, at which point he stopped. When the men chasing him caught up, they told the police that he was trying to break into their building. He defended himself, saying he was only doing his job, which was proven by the fact that one of the men had one of his flyers in his hand. He explained to the police that these men were chasing him, yelling that they were going to beat him up. The police dismissed his claim, saying that there was no problem, and instructed everyone to move along. No report was ever made.

On April 21, Mike passed away due to a stroke. MPC raised money for his funeral and held a ceremony in Moscow on May 2. MPC is also helping his family, who lives in Nigeria, and were receiving monetary support from Mike every couple of months.

**On the afternoon of 1-15 April**, a 17-year-old male from the Democratic Republic of Congo named Kyle left to play football with some friends near Bulvar Dmitriya Donskogo metro, Shcherbinka region. Kyle went to a store to get bread after playing a game of football against some Russians. After exiting the store and beginning to eat, he was approached by two 25-30-year-old Russians who were asking him for money, specifically 100 rubles. He responded by saying that he did not have money, pointing to his very simple and dry bread. They proceeded to harass him, making monkey-like gestures and slowly drawing closer to him. As they approached him, one eventually threw a punch at him, but he was able to dodge it. All of a sudden another three Russian men of the same age showed up at the scene, and all five circled him. They started to attack him, punching him in the face

and body. He eventually fell down and they started to push him towards a wall that was nearby. Shortly after, a car drove up, flashing its lights as a warning signal and, as a result, the men quickly ran off, leaving the scene. The Central Asian woman in the care came to help him. She called an ambulance for him and left without waiting for the ambulance to arrive. There were no other victims in the attack and, as far as he knows, there were no witnesses aside from the woman who called the ambulance.



As a result of the attack, Kyle received bruises all over his body, particularly his head and his ribs, and suffered a broken arm that was also dislocated. He received medical care at Butkin Hospital near Dinamo metro station. He stayed there for about a month, but was only given food and water because he did not have insurance or a means to pay the medical bills. After a month, he was discharged from the hospital with his arm still broken, but in a cast, because he could not afford the surgery. Afterward, he came to MPC Medical Clinic for help, where he was referred to various hospitals and clinics. Thanks to the work of a MPC nurse, we were able to raise the funds to get the surgery for him. He has had the operation and is now recovering.

He did not make a report to the police because he feels they will not help him.

This is the second physical attack the victim has suffered during his six-month stay in Russia.

**On 21 April**, a 30-year-old male from the Democratic Republic of Congo named Joseph was attacked and harassed multiple times throughout the day. The first attack started at around 15:00 near Kurskaya metro station. Joseph was standing with his wife, Michelle, and nearby was an African friend who was distributing flyers. Two men around 20-25 years old approached him and told him and his African friend to get close together so that he could photograph them, saying “I’d like to take a photo.” Joseph responded by saying “no, you don’t need to do that, please calm down.” The man proceeded to take the photo after which Joseph took the camera from him to try and delete the photo(s) he took. As a result of this, he was struck in the face near the right side of his ear. All of sudden, many more people began to arrive and attack him with the others. They were shouting various racist statements such as monkey, n\*\*\*\*\*, and Russia is for Russians. Several of these people made the Hitler sign (right hand pointing straight up in the air).<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, the police were standing nearby observing the attack and after many more people became involved, decided to take action and disperse the people. Things then calmed down and he and his wife got away. The other man, his friend, had managed to run off immediately.

Thereafter, Joseph, Michelle, and their Congolese friend headed for the Kurskaya Train Station to catch the commuter train home. While they were waiting outside of the train station, about seven men approached Joseph saying that he did not belong in Russia; Joseph tried to defend himself, saying “here, look, this is my Russian wife.” They told her that she should not be with him, pushed

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<sup>1</sup> This action is believed to be connected to “Hitler Day,” which takes place on April 20<sup>th</sup>, the day of Hitler’s birth. Migrants and students are warned to be careful three days before and after this day.

her off to the side, and told her that he is offending her and the country and then began to beat him up. More people in the area joined in, hitting him, stealing his things, and ganging up on him. He tried to defend himself and attempted to slowly move away while doing so. His Congolese friend, who was not being targeted in the attack, ran off to get help. He got the security guards at the train station, the police, and called a Tajik friend to come and help. After quickly arriving at the scene, the police told Joseph to calm down while the perpetrators were still attempting and successfully hitting him. The police even threatened to take Joseph away and arrest him. The scene would calm down, but once the police had left, the perpetrators would start attacking Joseph again. Meanwhile, there were many Russians and possibly non-native onlookers, some of whom were even filming and photographing this incident. Not one individual offered help to any of the victims.

Then, a dark-skinned man with Asian features arrived at the scene. He and his friends made a circle around Joseph and escorted him to a safer place near Krasnye Vorota metro station. Joseph indicated that the man thought he was a Muslim or “their brother,” which may have been the reason they came to help him.

#### Harassment case

Thereafter, they headed to Belorusskaya Train Station. Michelle decided to stop on the way to get Joseph some food because he was so weak and had lost a lot of blood. While Joseph waited outside of the supermarket he was approached by a drunk, Russian man in his 40s. The man ordered Joseph to allow him to take a picture, but he refused. The man continued harassing him and would not leave him alone as Joseph was requesting. Finally, Michelle exited the supermarket and threatened to call the FSB and the man finally left him alone.

They continued heading to the train station and made their way to the correct platform to get home. While standing opposite a group of around five to seven Russian men ages 20-25 on the other side of the platform, the men started to harass them, shouting racist slurs and throwing bottles at them (including beer bottles and a champagne bottle). No one was injured in the assault. Thankfully, the commuter train arrived very shortly thereafter and they headed home to safety.

As a result of the attack, Joseph was badly injured. He suffered multiple hits to different parts of his body, resulting in many bruises. His jacket was cut with a knife that he was being attacked with. His pants were ripped, he sustained a swollen hand and foot, his nose was hit, and he was injured on the side of his face near his right ear. In addition to the injuries Joseph sustained, his sunglasses, \$300, and 6,000 rubles were stolen from him. Most of the clothes he was wearing were ruined by knife cuts, people trying to get into his pockets, etc, and his bag was damaged.

Joseph and his wife believe that this was a racially-motivated attack because of all of the racist comments the attackers made. Those statements included: “monkey,” “Russia is for Russians,” “go back to the jungle,” “you’re not a person,” and “animal” among many other statements.

They did not report the attack to the police because the police were not helping them during the attack, so they believed it would be both difficult to work with the police, and also hard to make a report because none of the attackers were detained.

This is roughly the fifth physical attack Joseph has suffered during his 2.5-year stay and he reports being verbally harassed on a daily basis.

**On the evening of 2 May**, a 30-year-old male from the Democratic Republic of Congo named Sam was attacked on a commuter train while on his way home from Moscow. A large group of football

fans ages 20-30 initially began harassing people from the Caucasus on the train, asking why they were in Russia and telling them to go back home. They then turned their attention to Sam, asking him the same questions. Then they hit him, first in the back of the head with a baseball bat, then in the jaw, breaking a couple teeth. He was then hit in the lower back with the baseball bat, at which point he fell down, and the perpetrators started kicking and punching him all over his body. He lost consciousness at some point. He does remember that once the train arrived in Podolsk, there were police on the platform. What he remembers after that is waking up in the hospital.

Sam does not remember how many other victims there were in the attack, but the people from the Caucasus originally being targeted were also beaten by the perpetrators. There were other witnesses to the attack, someone called the police, but no one intervened.

As a result of the attack, Sam suffered from broken teeth, a large gash on his lower back, a split lip, major headaches, extreme pain in his head, back, legs, and jaw. He also was unconscious for quite some time and likely suffered a concussion. He was hospitalized at the Central Hospital of Podolsk for three days. He did not get much care because he was unable to pay for his treatment and was sent home without any medication. Later on, Sam sought medical care at MPC Medical Clinic and has fully recovered from his injuries, except his broken teeth.

Sam considered making a formal report, but decided it was not worth it. On the day of the event, the police arrived on the platform in Podolsk, however they did not apprehend any of the suspects. Once he regained consciousness in the hospital, he was visited by the police who said they would try to apprehend the perpetrators. He has not heard from them since.

**On the night of 18 May**, a 38-year-old Ghanian male named Steve went to visit his friend and his wife from Ghana at the apartment they share with their landlord near Medvedkovo metro station. He decided to take a nap while everyone else was mingling outside. While he was sleeping, about five Russian men, ages 25-30 of large build, broke the door down and entered the apartment. They found Steve in one of the rooms and began beating him, causing him to bleed severely. They finally stopped beating him when they noticed the Russian landlord and her son and tried to start trouble with him, but somehow he deterred them and they left. Steve called his brother and wife to come and they arrived shortly thereafter. However, after they arrived, the men who had beaten Steve returned. Steve was on his way out the door when the men told him to come with them. They put him in the elevator and sent him to the first floor alone, telling him they would meet him there. Once Steve reached the first floor, with no sign of the men, he made a run for the street and caught a taxi directly home. There were no other victims in the attack or witnesses.

In the following days, he received a phone call from the friends he had visited that night, saying that their landlord was requesting that he pay for the damages to the door. Steve, of course, did not understand why he would have to pay for this, since he was not the one who broke it down; moreover, he was the victim of the attack. However, not wanting to cause any trouble, Steve said he would pay for a new door and originally was trying to come up with the money to pay for it. Steve has since decided not to pay for the door because he believes it is not his fault, nor did he open the door to let the men in who caused the trouble. He has also found out that his friends are being forced to leave the apartment because the landlord does not want this kind of trouble.

Steve sustained a swollen left eye, loss of blood during the attack and bruises all over his body. He also injured his neck and the right side of his back was very sore. He received medical care from an African doctor, a friend of a friend, who made a house visit and follow-up care at the MPC Medical Clinic and has fully recovered since the attack.

He does not want to make a report to the police because he does not have valid documentation.

**On the evening of 20 May**, a Task Force member named Angela was walking around on the west side of Olympiiski Stadium, when she came across a Caucasian male in his mid-twenties who had just been severely beaten. An eye-witness said he saw the victim walking when a large group of young men started beating and jumping on him. No weapons were seen. The group of young men was reportedly in their teens to mid-twenties. The eye-witness was far away and came running when the attack was over. When Angela saw the man, he was slumped over, seated on the sidewalk with blood streaming everywhere. There was a man standing next to him and another came up soon afterward. They said the police had been there and walked away. No one intervened in the attack and most of those who came to help had no idea what to do. Angela called an ambulance. Angela reports that the police apparently saw the victim and then walked away. She saw the police walking away from that area before she saw the victim. In the 15 minutes that she stood there, the police did not return, nor does it seem that they called for help. She tried to flag down a police car, but was ignored. Angela gave the victim and the man standing next to him her number, but was not contacted after the attack.

It is unclear what specific injuries he sustained. He was conscious, but could not stand up. We are unsure what kind of medical treatment he may have received at the hospital.

The motives behind this attack are unclear, but the Task Force found it necessary to report it as it contributes to our findings of societal and police responses.

**On the evening of 8 June**, a 41-year-old man from the Democratic Republic of Congo named Brad together with Joseph and his wife Michelle (victims in 20 April attack) and her 12-year-old daughter, Irina, got onto trolleybus No. 12 at Okhotny Ryad bus stop. After getting on the bus, a babushka began to accuse Brad of not paying for his ride, mistaking him for someone else who did not pay. She then started shouting, “you monkeys are overrunning our country, what are you doing here, Stalin would have dealt with you, Russia is for Russians.” Ignoring her insults, they all carried on and took their place on the bus. However, the racist assaults continued and many other passengers started joining in on the verbal harassment. Brad and Joseph were being told that “they did not belong in Russia,” that “Russia is for Russians,” “they should go back to the jungle” among many other racist slurs. Finally, two men, a Belarusian male 20-30 years old and a Russian male in his 50s, took action and came at Brad and started to beat him. Joseph tried to defend Brad, but the perpetrators turned on him and began beating him as well. Passengers were calling them drug users and killers, saying more racist slurs like “bananas aren’t here” and “you are gorillas.” Michelle also got caught up in the attack and received multiple hits to her body. Upon arriving at Triumfalnaya Ploshad bus stop, the bus driver halted the bus to call the police because of the disturbances on the bus. However, when the onlookers and attackers heard that the bus driver was calling the police, everyone exited the bus and ran from the scene. The police arrived at the scene and escorted the young Belarusian male perpetrator, another witness, and the victims to a nearby police station to make a report.

There was one witness and the perpetrator who gave a report and a short report of the bus driver’s account of the attack was documented at the scene by a police officer. There were no other victims of the attack.

As a result of the attack, Brad’s nose was injured and possibly broken. He also suffered from head pain. He received medical attention at MPC Medical Clinic and has now fully recovered. Joseph was



injured in the left eye and his left arm. He was also cut by a knife on his hand, where a small scar remains now. His glasses were taken from him deliberately and thrown on the ground and stomped on. Joseph chose not to seek medical attention because he does not like doctors and fears them. He still suffers from the injury caused to his right arm and pain to his left eye.

The police followed up with them a week after the attack and assigned them to an investigator, who has met with them and documented a second report. They have been in contact since and are waiting for a court date to be scheduled.

They have had a very positive experience with the police. Joseph indicated that the second police officer they reported to knew who he was because he saw him on television from a previous attack on 20 April reported by MPC Task Force. He said he was very nice to them and perhaps this video coverage may be a reason for this.

**On the night of 16 June**, a 39-year-old Cameroonian man named Chris was attacked on his way home from a friend's birthday party between Lyublino and Vykhino metro stations. He was accompanied by two of his roommates, a Cameroonian man and a woman from the Ivory Coast. While walking through a park on their way home, they came across three Russian males around 25-30 years old, who were clearly talking about the three of them, trying to provoke them. Chris warned his Cameroonian friend, who was intoxicated, not to cause any trouble or say anything to provoke them. He responded by shouting at Chris, telling him to shut up and "there is nothing they can do to us," and so on. The Russians had originally passed them, but once the Cameroonian began shouting, they returned, believing they were harassing them. The Cameroonian noticed they were returning and ran off; Chris, however, stayed with the woman for fear what would happen to her if he ran away as well. The Russians began to beat Chris, punching him in the face and kicking him all over his body. They were shouting racist slurs at him such as "n\*\*\*\*\*." He was able to protect his face and block most of the punches. One of the men pulled out a knife, which was when the woman, who was standing nearby watching this happen, pulled out her phone and pretended to call the police. This scared off the men and Chris and the woman returned home. There were no other witnesses aside from the woman or victims of the attack.

As a result of the attack, Chris suffered from pain on his face, cheekbone, behind his ear and on the back of his head. He also had body pain for some time and possibly some bruising. He received medical care at MPC Medical Clinic and has now fully recovered.

Neither of them called the police because of the language barrier and they did not know the number to call for assistance. Chris did not report the attack later because he knows the police will ask for his documentation and he has an expired visa.

**On the evening of 14 July**, a 35-year-old man from Benin named Zachery was returning home from work and took an underpass to cross the road. Three Russian men around 35-40 years old saw him entering from the other side and awaited his exit. They came up to him and hit him in the chest, causing him to fall to the ground. They called him names such as idiot and he identified the men as skinheads. They took his phone and 5000 rubles that he had collected from working. A driver noticed this event taking place and stopped, yelling at the men, as a result of which the men fled from the scene. The Russian driver, around 40 years old, helped Zachery up and seeing that he was hurt and very upset, gave him 500 rubles to help him get home.

As a result of the attack, Zachery suffered from chest pain due to the severe hit to his chest during the attack. He sought medical help at the MPC Medical Advice Centre.

Zachery did not report the attack to the police because he does not speak the Russian language and there is not a police station located near his residence, making it difficult to report since he does not have money to travel.

This is the second attack Zachery has suffered since his arrival about one year ago. He returned to Benin with the help of the International Organization of Migration in September.

**On the evening of 27 July**, two men from the Democratic Republic of Congo named Joseph and Brad ages 30 and 41 respectively (victims of physical attacks in June and April 2012), sat down on a bench near the Kremlin when someone from behind started throwing bottles at them. When Joseph and Brad stood up to go home, the two attackers approached them and tried to stop them from leaving. Then, another Russian male, probably from the same group, came up to Joseph and Brad and started assaulting them. He pushed them and then hit Joseph in the face. All the while, the perpetrators were yelling out racial slurs like “go home”, “you don’t belong here”, “what are you doing here”, among others. Brad was able to get away and ran off to find the police. He returned to the scene with some police officers who took control of the situation. They called an ambulance for Joseph and took Brad and the three perpetrators to the police station to make a report. There were no other victims in the attack, but there were witnesses around that did not respond to the attack.

During the attack Joseph was punched in the eye, resulting in a cut and a black eye and sustained an injury to his knee and shoulder as well as bruises and broken teeth. He received medical care at a hospital near Partizinskaya metro station. Brad received multiple hits to the face, but did not receive medical attention as he recovered before he was able to seek care at a facility.

Brad filed a report to the police the day of the attack and returned on Monday to give further details to the police. The perpetrators were released after they gave their report. Joseph filed a report at the police station later in July. There has been no further action taken since the attack was reported.

Joseph and Brad report that they are harassed on a daily basis, both having suffered from multiple racially-motivated attacks during their long-term stay in Russia.

**On the evening of 11 October**, a 39-year-old man from Cameroon named Henry was trying to put money on his phone at the entrance to the Aviamotornaya metro station, when a large white man in his twenties came up from behind and pushed Henry into the wall. Henry fell to the ground, then a different man sat on him, and the two perpetrators began punching and kicking Henry, telling him to “go home”. There were at least two perpetrators, but there may have been more. Henry is unable to remember much from the attack and thinks he may have lost consciousness. His money and documents were stolen during the attack, and he was badly beaten, but no bystanders tried to stop the attack or help him following the attack.

When Henry regained consciousness, he was unsure what to do, so he used all his strength to take the metro to Slavyanski Bulvar where a friend lives. Though he was covered in blood, no one stopped to help him. Henry’s friend met him at the Slavyanski Bulvar metro station, where they found police officers and asked for help. The police called an ambulance. Once at the hospital, X-rays were taken of his head, chest and limbs. Without even giving him the results, the medical staff asked Henry if he had any money, which he did not as his money had been stolen during the attack. Not strong enough to go home and unsure what to do, he spent the night in the hospital waiting room. In the morning, he returned home with the help of his friend and then came to the MPC Medical Advice Centre as soon as he felt strong enough, about two weeks later.

As a result of the attack, Henry sustained bruised ribs, cuts, bruises and a broken nose. Henry sought medical attention at the MPC Medical Advice Centre and had X-rays taken of his ribs at a referred local clinic, which showed they were not broken. The Racial Task Force provided Henry with a care package of food to help him through the recovery process, as he was not physically able to work for two weeks.

Henry did not report the attack to the police because he does not believe the police will do anything to help.

This is the first physical attack Henry has suffered since his arrival in Russia one year ago.

**On an evening in early November**, a 42-year-old man from the Ivory Coast named Benjamin was on his way home from Lumumba University when he was attacked by two Russian men ages 25 to 30 who were sharing the same marshrutka. The two men along with the help of the driver pulled Benjamin out of the vehicle, pinned him down and robbed him. They took all of the money he had withdrawn from the bank earlier in the evening, and left him on the pavement. Passers-by, who witnessed the attack, failed to stop. The motivation behind this attack is unclear since Benjamin does not know Russian and was therefore unable to understand what the perpetrators were yelling at him; however, the other facts of the case point to racial motivation.

Benjamin did not receive any injuries as a result of the attack.

He did not report the attack to the police because he feared the police would ask him to produce his documents.

This is the first physical attack Benjamin has suffered since his arrival in Russia 2 months ago.

**On the evening of 18 December**, a 23-year-old man from Cameroon named Alexander was attacked outside of his Russian girlfriend's apartment in Moscow. The details of the attack are still being determined, but what is known is that Alexander suffered several stab wounds and a great loss of blood. He was found passed out a couple hundred feet from where the attack apparently occurred while trying to make his way home. A neighbor found him unconscious and called an ambulance. Shortly after his arrival at the hospital, Alexander fell into a coma and passed away on 25 December.

Alexander's girlfriend has contacted the police and they are looking into the incident.

Alexander had been studying at the Russian Academy of Art for three years.

## B. Harassment

**On the afternoon of 22 May**, 38-year-old Ghanian citizen Steve (the victim in 18 May attack), was walking to Aviamotornaya metro station and was harassed by three to four Russian males around the age of 50-60. One of them was trying to come at Steve, saying "where did you get so dark?" but the others held him back while also making various racist slurs. He was accompanied by the Task Force coordinator.

**On the evening of 8 June 2012**, 17-year-old Democratic of Congo citizen Kyle (the victim in the 1-15 April attack) was heading home to Shchelkovskaya metro station from various tests in preparation for his surgery the following week. After returning home, he and a friend, Tom, went to the store to

buy some food and water. Upon exiting the store, they noticed a police car and reentered the store in an attempt to avoid being stopped by the police. Shortly after, they left the store and went to wait at the minibus stop to go home for the night. The last minibus did not stop for them and two police officers approached them. They asked for their documents, but neither had them with them. Tom explained that he had left his at home and Kyle told the police his were with the nurse, who was helping him prepare for his surgery. This continued back and forth for some time, with the police asking for the documents while Tom and Kyle tried to explain where their documents were. (It should be noted that neither speak Russian very well, so the language barrier could have played a role in misunderstandings on both ends.) Tom was standing in the corner of the bus stop booth and one of the police officers approached him and attempted to grab him. In response, Tom started to run away from the officer, and Kyle followed in suit. However, due to Kyle's condition, he could not run very fast and the officer quickly caught up to him and pushed him forcefully into a tree. Kyle immediately fell to the ground because of the pain this caused to his injured arm. The police officer then kicked him twice, grabbed him and forced him to stand. Kyle tried to explain the pain this was causing him and asked the officer just to let him return home where he could call the nurse to explain where his documents were. Meanwhile, the other officer caught Tom and they headed to the police car together with Kyle and the other police officer. While walking to the car, Kyle collapsed as a result of the pain and was crying and shouting from the pain the police officer had caused to his injured arm. The police finally called an ambulance, which arrived shortly thereafter, but Kyle did not want to leave Tom. The police reassured Kyle that they would follow him in the police car to the hospital. Upon arrival at the hospital, he was denied assistance because he did not have his documentation. He called the nurse who had been helping him and she eventually came to the hospital to retrieve Kyle. She found him outside of the hospital with the paramedics.

In the end, Kyle lost his phone and the police did not follow up; however, Tom was taken somewhere, possibly a forest nearby, by the police, who took all of his money and left him there.

Neither made an official report to the police for obvious reasons.

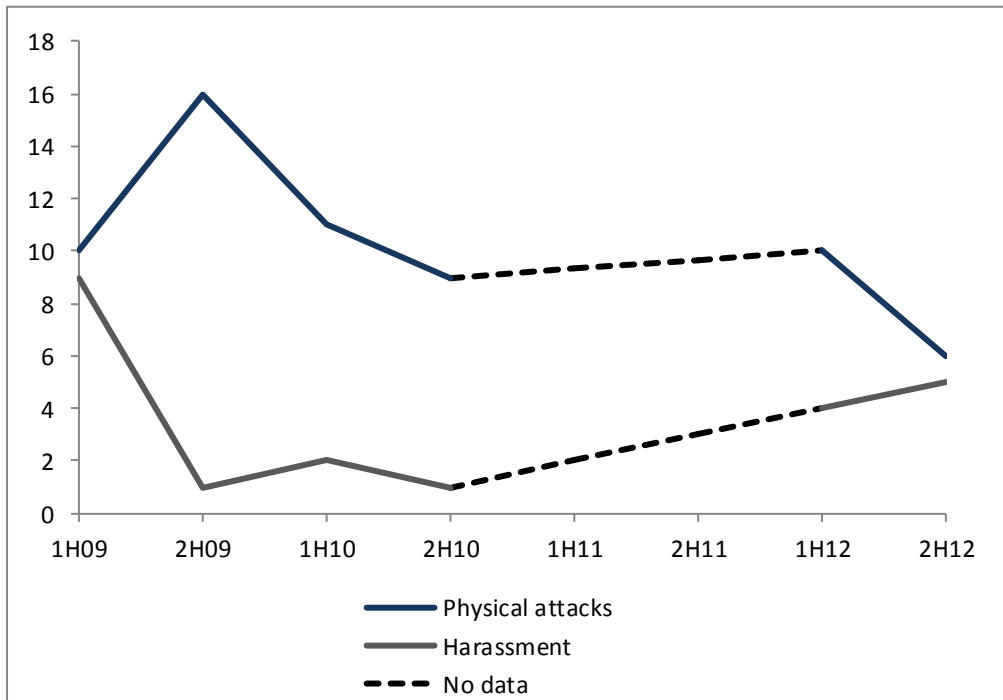
*In the third quarter, the Racial Task Force established a new system for reporting cases of harassment that allows individuals to fill out reports themselves in the hope to increase reporting of such cases. As such, we are working out the details and issues that have arisen and therefore, the harassment reports below are less detailed for the moment.*

Harassment cases were reported by:

- A 31-year-old African male;
- A 30-year-old male from the Democratic Republic of Congo named Joseph (named in above attack), involving another man from the DRC (the police were present at the time);
- A 31-year-old male from the DRC and another male from the Ivory Coast;
- A 30-year-old pregnant woman from Cameroon who was denied medical attention due to the color of her skin on the morning of 10 July;
- A 35-year-old female from Cameroon filing a case of harassment from 10 August.

## Facts and Figures

### Race Crime Statistics 2009-2012



	2009	2010	2011	2012*	Total
<b>Physical attacks</b>	26	20	N/A	16	62
<b>Harassment</b>	10	3	N/A	9	22

Source: Moscow Protest Chaplaincy Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment

\*One attack in 2012 was on a Caucasian man.

The graph depicts information on racially-motivated violence and harassment on the African community collected by the Racial Task Force in 2009-2012. The numbers do not represent how racism has affected the entire African community, but rather those who seek our services and with whom the Task Force interacts at MPC Social Services Parish Center located in Moscow, Russia.

## Projects

### *Community Events*

For the community directly impacted by racially-motivated violence, quarterly community events will provide a platform for Task Force members to share safety tips, identify and spread the word about potentially dangerous local major events (which induce higher instances of violence) such as soccer matches or nationalist marches, and to encourage members of the community to share experiences to serve as a support group and to help restore an injured community.

### *Facebook Page*

The Task Force will be launching a Facebook page at the beginning of March.

The page will offer:

- ✓ General information about the Task Force
- ✓ Updates about our current work and upcoming events
- ✓ Volunteer and Intern opportunities
- ✓ Bi-annual and Annual Reports in English, Russian and French
- ✓ Information for individuals considering moving to Russia
- ✓ Safety tips for living in Moscow
- ✓ News on hate crime in Russia

### *Racism Awareness Week – March 17-23, 2013*

In connection with International Racism Awareness Week and International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Racial Task Force will have multiple events throughout the week aimed at educating society about hate crime and teaching tolerance as well as initiating dialogue among civil society, faith-based organizations and the Russian government. It will also hold a short informational campaign targeted at informing the African community about victim support and resources available via the Task Force and other outlets.

*If you are interested in coordinating an event with the Task Force, please contact the Coordinator at [taskforce@mpcss.org](mailto:taskforce@mpcss.org).*

## Conclusion

Since 2009, the number of attacks against Africans living in Russia has statistically decreased however, the situation remains bad. The majority of Africans describe race relations in Moscow to be tense for various reasons. Difficulty finding a job and stable residence, verbal harassment and physical attacks are just a few obstacles Africans face on a regular basis, demonstrating the struggle of integrating into Russian society. While there remain limited resources to help African migrants both integrate into society and recover from race related abuses, the Russian government has taken some steps to improve this situation.

The Russian government introduced a new migration policy through 2025 in June 2012. One of the main goals of this legislation is to help educate and integrate migrant workers into Russian society, which was absent before this policy was introduced. As a part of this policy, a new “adaption center” was opened in Moscow in November, offering services to migrants including Russian language and culture courses, a hotline and legal consultations among other services. Likewise, the Task Force has established its own resources for victims of discrimination and migrant integration, working with civil society and embassies in Moscow, and informs the African community about such new programs. These kinds of initiatives need to continue and on a larger scale to enable migrants to integrate into society, but also to send a message to Russian society from the top down that discrimination against migrants and people of color is not acceptable.

Russian law lacks guarantees against racial discrimination and the Russian government has yet to develop a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, including a definition of racial discrimination in domestic law, thus affecting society’s stance on this issue. A Levada Center poll of Russians in November 2012 showed that 41% supported the statement “Russia for Russians” with some reservations, 32% indicated there will probably be massive bloodshed in Russia on nationalist grounds in the near future, and 21% each feel animosity or annoyance towards migrants from the southern republics living in their city/region.<sup>2</sup> This poll shows that racial discrimination and nationalist feelings are largely present in Russian society and steps must be taken to prevent further escalation of the problem.

We see that some positive steps have been taken, but there is much left to do before Russian sentiments towards Africans drastically change. The Task Force hopes that its reports, along with similar studies and research, will result in a more open and public debate on how Russia can deal with racism, especially its violent manifestations. Ultimately, this report seeks to help vulnerable communities in Moscow and across Russia be better served and protected.

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<sup>2</sup>Levada Center (2012). Russians on ethnic tensions, nationalist slogans and the situation in the Caucasus, November 23-26, 2012. Poll questions retrieved January 21, 2013, from Levada Center database.

## **Policy Recommendations**

The Task Force recommends the following:

1. Russian legislators should state publicly that racism, and not just extremism or hooliganism, will not be tolerated in Russia;
2. Russian law enforcement authorities should increase efforts to catch offenders of racially motivated crimes and bring them to court;
3. Russian law enforcement authorities should increase efforts to reduce the incidence of extortion amongst its officers;
4. Russian government should develop a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, with a specific definition of racial discrimination;
5. African governments should increase efforts to educate their citizens about how to register with their embassies, regardless of their legal status, in order to track migrants in Russia;
6. African governments should provide information to their citizens on the risks of being attacked on the basis of their race in Russia on their foreign ministries' websites; and
7. NGOs and media outlets should increase efforts to document and report instances of racially-motivated violence against minority populations.

If you have any questions regarding the information in this report, or would like to learn more about the work that we do to document racially-motivated violence and harassment, please contact Jennifer Voecks, Coordinator, MPC Task Force on Racial Violence and Harassment, at [taskforce@mpcss.org](mailto:taskforce@mpcss.org).