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The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation in the Altai krai
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Dear Director of the Federal Penitentiary Service of the Altai krai,
Dear Commissioner for Human Rights in the Altai krai,

I am deeply concerned by the unjust imprisonment and alleged ill-treatment of RusNews journalist Maria Ponomarenko who is under your control. Since her arrest in 2022 there have been multiple reports of her ill-treatment and arbitrary punishment in custody in IK-6 (Shipunovo) and SIZO-1 and SIZO-2 in Barnaul, including forced psychiatric treatment and repeated placement in solitary confinement.

Ponomarenko was sentenced to six years imprisonment solely for speaking out against Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Recently, her prison sentence was extended as she was convicted for being violent towards the prison officers, which she denies.

Ponomarenko is being punished solely for exercising her right to freedom of expression and must be released immediately and unconditionally. In the meantime, I request that you use your powers to ensure that the ill-treatment of Maria Ponomarenko is immediately stopped and that her treatment in any prison institution, as well as while in transit between them, complies with international law and standards.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Yours sincerely,