For Immediate Release

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LITVINENKO – OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS TO APOLOGISE IN THE HIGH COURT

Julia Svetlichnaja, a PhD student at the University of Westminster (who did a series of interviews with Alexander Litvinenko before his murder in 2006) has succeeded in her libel claim against Oxford University Press. Her claim has been settled with payment of damages, costs and a statement will be read in the High Court on Monday 15 March 2010.

Steven Heffer, Head of Reputation Management at law firm Collyer Bristow LLP, commented "my client's action concerned a book published last year by Oxford University Press "The Quality of Freedom: Khodorkovsky, Putin and the Yukos Affair" written by Professor Sakwa"

"It was suggested that Ms Svetlichnaja had lied in saying she was a student at the University of Westminster and was writing a series of academic articles about Chechnya. It was falsely alleged that she was a senior figure in a shadowy organisation (Russian Investors) which was run by Alexei Golubovich, a suspected embezzler and fraudster, who had been the financial director of Yukos and who had been subsequently recruited by the FSB.

It was also falsely suggested that Miss Svetlichnaja was spreading black propaganda against Alexander Litvinenko on behalf of Mr Golubovich and the FSB because Mr Litvinenko was threatening to blackmail Mr Golubovich and others on the FSB's target list in connection with the Yukos affair".

"Oxford University Press now accept that these allegations were entirely without foundation and they will be making a statement in the High Court on Monday 15 March 2010 withdrawing the imputations unreservedly".

"Oxford University Press has also given an undertaking not to repeat the allegations and paid a sum in damages and legal costs.

Background

Collyer Bristow acted for Julia Svetlichnaja in the libel claim in relation to the book which was published in early 2009. Previously, Collyer Bristow have concluded successful libel claims for Miss Svetlichnaja against the Sunday Times and Aftenposten, a major Norwegian newspaper.

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Notes to Editors

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