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Russia

# A Draw for Ford but a Victory for All

- News from around the world -

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**The strike at the Ford factory in Vsevolozhsk, located right outside St. Petersburg, ended on Dec. 14. It was the longest and most intense standoff in post-Soviet times.**

The strike began on Nov. 20 and continued for three weeks. According to union activists, the plant's conveyors came to a full stop. Then management threw together one shift mainly composed of office workers and, toward the end of the strike, a second shift to keep the assembly line running. But the quality control department continued its strike, which means that cars produced in early December might not meet all of the technical standards.

The conflict at the Ford factory took on significance far beyond the organization itself and even beyond the auto manufacturing industry in Russia. The media from all over the country covered the story extensively.

This was the country's first open-ended strike since the new Labor Code came into force several years ago. It was also the first strike that the authorities did not squash and in which its participants obtained a guarantee that they would not be subjected to reprisals. The strike once again demonstrated that the laws work against labor unions, but it also showed that strong workers' organizations can find ways to get around many of those restrictions.

*This is an extract from [a longer article](#) in today's Moscow Times, with whose kind permission it appears.*