

# Presidential Human Rights Council to Evaluate Navalny's Sentence

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The presidential council on human rights will conduct a public expert evaluation of Alexei Navalny and Pyotr Ofitserov's sentences in the high-profile KirovLes trial, a news report said Thursday.

The evaluation, which will begin after the verdict comes into force, was supported by the majority of the council's members, Itar-Tass reported.

Political think tank head and journalist Maxim Shevchenko was among the few who opposed the evaluation. He said the presidential human rights council has neither the authority nor the means to conduct it, and its work would predictably be "populist." Shevchenko stressed that the sentence was not politically motivated.

Other council members disagreed, saying that such a well known case deserves evaluation. Alexander Verkhovsky, head of the information and analytics center Sova, said the review will

be particularly useful in regards to the relationship between law enforcement and the business community.

Lilia Shibanova, executive director of the human rights association Golos, called the KirovLes case a political one and said the council must look into the government's use of courts against the opposition and human rights defenders, a group of which she considers Navalny to be part.

The idea to conduct an expert evaluation was voiced by the council's head, Mikhail Fedotov, last week after the Kirov court announced its verdict. He likened the evaluation to the review called for by then-President Medvedev after the second Yukos trial in 2010.

On July 18, a Kirov court found Navalny guilty of embezzling 16 million rubles (\$500,000) while working for the region's governor and sentenced him to five years imprisonment and a 500,000 ruble fine. The second defendant, businessman Pyotr Ofitserov, received a four-year prison term and was also ordered to pay a fine.

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