

Russia's 'Flaming Door' Shock Artist Pavlensky Denied Bail

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Artist Pyotr Pavlensky listens during a hearing at a Russian courthouse.

The Moscow City court ruled Thursday that the detention of shock artist Pyotr Pavlensky, charged with vandalism after he torched the entrance to Russia's security service headquarters on Lubyanskaya Ploshchad on Nov. 9, was lawful, rejecting a petition by his lawyer Olga Chavdar that he be released on bail or placed under house arrest, Russian media reported Thursday.

Chavdar took issue with what she said was the court's belief that Pavlensky set the door on fire in order to "further his political and social goals," the Interfax news agency wrote Thursday.

"How could the artist Pavlensky, who is not a member of any existing political or social organizations, be guided by anybody's goals?" she was quoted as saying.

According to the TASS news agency, she said that there was no reason to believe that her client was a flight risk.

She also said that the defense team, as well as Pavlensky himself, intended to demonstrate the “absurdity” of the charges brought against him, Interfax reported.

On Nov. 10, Moscow's Taganka district court sanctioned Pavlensky's arrest until Dec. 8. The artist, who had gained worldwide fame for nailing his scrotum to Moscow's Red Square in November 2013, was detained immediately after his stunt, having made no attempt to leave the scene.

He had earlier asked his investigators to change the charge from vandalism to terrorism, arguing that others who had committed similar acts in the past had been judged under that offense.

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