

European Rights Court Demands Navalny's 'Immediate' Release

February 17, 2021



The ECHR document published on Navalny's website says its demand was made in “regard to the nature and extent of risk to the applicant’s life.” **Moscow Court Press Service**

Europe's top human rights court has [called on](#) Russia to release jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny "immediately."

Navalny [was sentenced](#) to nearly 3 years in prison on Feb. 2 for violating his probation in a 2014 fraud conviction while he recovered from a near-fatal poisoning in Germany. The ECHR in 2017 ruled that Navalny's 2014 conviction had been “arbitrary and unreasonable.”

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)'s demand for Navalny’s release “shall apply with immediate effect,” according to a Wednesday press release.

The ECHR said seven of its judges made the resolution in “regard to the nature and extent of risk to the applicant’s life” after Navalny filed a complaint with the court seeking his release on Jan. 20.

This marks the first time the ECHR has made such a resolution, Navalny's attorney Olga Mikhailova [told](#) Interfax. Russian authorities are obliged to comply with it, she added, as Russia is a member of the Council of Europe rights body.

Russian Justice Minister Konstantin Chuychenko has [called](#) the ECHR's order "impossible to comply with," saying it contradicts Russian law.

The Justice Ministry had said on Tuesday that it wouldn't comply with ECHR calls to release Navalny, calling such demands "a flagrant intervention in operation of the judicial system of a sovereign state," the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#).

Navalny's Jan. 17 detention upon his return from Germany and a mass crackdown on protesters calling for his release both sparked outrage among European capitals. The EU is reportedly drafting new sanctions against Moscow as a result.

Navalny's legal team has also filed a complaint with the ECHR arguing that Russia violated Navalny's right to life by refusing to open an investigation into his August poisoning in Siberia. European scientists concluded that he had been poisoned with the Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok.

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