

Human Rights in Russia and the death of Alexei Navalny: Joint Statement to the OSCE

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The UK and 16 other countries commemorate Alexei Navalny's death in a Russian penal colony in 2024, condemn continued repression in Russia and call for the release of political prisoners.

Thank you Chair.

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the following participating States : Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and my own country Czechia; as well as Australia as an OSCE Partner for Cooperation.

On the second commemoration of Alexei Navalny's death in a Russian penal colony, we once again express our deepest condolences to his family. We underline that the Russian authorities remain solely responsible. The February 3rd judgement by the European Court of Human Rights furthermore underlined that Russia bears responsibility for the inhuman and degrading treatment of Navalny in detention and for the lack of adequate response to his requests. Especially given recent findings published by the United Kingdom, Sweden, France, Germany and the Netherlands, we reiterate our demands for a thorough and transparent investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death.

The human rights situation in Russia has rapidly deteriorated before and ever since this tragic event, as reports from the UN Special Rapporteur have shown. The Kremlin has consolidated and expanded its repertoire of repressive tactics and the misuse of national security legislation in particular has brought about harsh sentences against human right defenders, journalists, lawyers and doctors, among many others. As Navalny's legacy endures, we stand by the brave Russian human rights defenders and independent civil society actors that continue to work under ever greater personal risks.

According to independent human rights monitor OVD-Info, more than 1,700 people are currently detained in Russia on political grounds, including Ukrainian political prisoners in Russian captivity; many of them for speaking up and acting against Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. The UN Special Rapporteur's reports illustrate how many political prisoners are tortured, denied adequate medical treatment and placed in forced psychiatric detention. Within Ukraine, the Russian state has intensified its violence and aggression against the Ukrainian people. The repression inside Russia furthermore enables its aggression abroad. We remain steadfast: The Russian authorities must fully comply with all their international obligations and release all political prisoners.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/human-rights-in-russia-and-the-death-of-alexei-navalny-joint-statement-to-the-osce>