

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST DENIED ACCESS TO LAWYER

Since 10 December, Russia's Investigative Committee has arbitrarily removed four lawyers representing activist Lilia Chanysheva from the case, leaving her without a legal counsel of her choice in violation of her right to a fair trial. Liliya Chanysheva, a former regional coordinator of "Navalny's headquarters" in the city of Ufa, has been in detention since 9 November 2021, under false charges of "establishing or leading an extremist association" punishable by up to 10 years in prison. She has committed no crime and must be released immediately.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation

Igor Viktorovich Krasnov

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Genproc>

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Online form (Russian only): <https://ipriem.genproc.gov.ru/contacts/ipriem/send>

Dear Prosecutor General,

*I am writing to express my concern over the continued prosecution, arbitrary detention and violation of rights of activist **Lilia Chanysheva**. She is being held in pretrial detention in Moscow, almost 1,500 km away of her hometown in Ufa, on absurd charges of "establishing or leading an extremist association".*

Since 10 December 2021, officers of the Investigative Committee and the Federal Penal Service have barred, under false pretext, four lawyers from representing and visiting Lilia Chanysheva in detention. As a result, she has been left without a lawyer of her choice, in violation of her right to a fair trial.

Accusations against Lilia Chanysheva stem from her peaceful civic and political activities as a regional coordinator of "Navalny's headquarters". These have been falsely considered "extremist".

Lilia Chanysheva has committed no internationally recognizable crime and is just another victim of the authorities' crackdown on Aleksei Navalny's associates and supporters. Her prosecution is unfounded and politically motivated and violates her rights to freedom of expression and association.

In the light of the above, I urge you to take all the necessary steps to ensure that Lilia Chanysheva is released immediately and that all charges against her are dropped. Pending that, she must be allowed to be represented by a lawyer of her choice.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Lilia Chanyшева, a former regional coordinator of “Navalny’s headquarters” in Ufa, Bashkortostan (central Russia), was arrested on 9 November 2021, following a search at her home. On the same day, the police searched the homes of other activists in Ufa and other Russian cities as part of a criminal case against Aleksei Navalny and his associates.

On 10 November, the Kirovsky District Court of Ufa put Lilia Chanyшева in pretrial detention. She was accused of “establishing or leading an extremist association” (Art. 282.1(1) of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation) in connection with her past work with Aleksei Navalny. If convicted, Lilia Chanyшева could face up to 10 years’ imprisonment. She was transferred from Ufa to Moscow on 21 November.

On 10 December, Lilia Chanyшева’s lawyer Vladimir Voronin was prevented from visiting her at the pretrial detention centre. Later, he learned that a member of the Investigative Committee had removed him from the case under the false pretext of a conflict of interest. Over the next two weeks, three more lawyers who tried to visit Lilia Chanyшева in detention were similarly prevented from doing so by the Investigative Committee. As of January 2022, Lilia Chanyшева has no lawyer in Moscow.

On 9 June 2021, the Moscow City Court arbitrarily banned as “extremist” three civil society organizations, namely the Anti-Corruption Foundation, the Citizens’ Rights Protection Foundation and “Navalny’s headquarters”, all of them linked to arbitrarily imprisoned Aleksei Navalny. The court hearing was closed to the media and the general public, and the grounds for the designation have not been made public. According to the information in possession of Amnesty International, no one of Navalny’s organizations have committed, called for or condoned any violent acts nor have did they committed any other internationally recognizable crimes.

On 28 September, the Russian authorities announced a new criminal investigation against Aleksei Navalny and his associates on unfounded charges of “establishment of an extremist association”. In October, it transpired that this investigation was joined with four other criminal cases against Aleksei Navalny, his colleagues and supporters. Lilia Chanyшева is the first of Navalny’s associates who has been arrested under this criminal case.

On 2 February 2021, Aleksei Navalny, a leading Russian opposition activist and anti-corruption campaigner, was given a custodial sentence of two years and eight months for purported violation of his probation terms, under his previous, politically motivated, sentence. Russian authorities have refused to release him despite the absurdity of these accusations (Aleksei Navalny had not reported to his probation officer while he was recovering abroad from his near-fatal poisoning) that flew in the face of mass protests in Russia and internationally, and the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights which established political motivation of the prosecution of Aleksei Navalny and demanded his immediate release. He is a prisoner of conscience and must be freed immediately and unconditionally.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: Russian, English.

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 15 March 2022

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Lilia Chanyшева (she/her)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur46/5026/2021/en/>