



April 6, 2021

Ambassador Anatoly Ivanovich Antonov  
Embassy of the Russian Federation  
2650 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20007

**Re: Amnesty International USA Calls for Aleksei Navalny's access to appropriate medical care and release**

Dear Ambassador Antonov:

On behalf of Amnesty International USA, I write to you to call on your government to grant Aleksei Navalny urgent access to medical care from a physician of his choosing and to provide for his immediate release.

Mr. Navalny's health has severely deteriorated following his January 17, 2021 arrest. Mr. Navalny has complained of pain in his back and numbness in his legs, and the condition appears to be worsening every day. His health condition has been further exacerbated by systematic sleep deprivation at the hands of prison officials. This comes after his original poisoning by a nerve agent on August 20, 2020. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has confirmed that Mr. Navalny was exposed to a toxic chemical acting as a cholinesterase inhibitor, whose biomarkers are similar to the nerve agent "Novichok". Despite repeated demands, Mr. Navalny has been denied access to a medical professional of his choice.

Government officials are obligated to protect the health of individuals in their detention. Failure to do so represents a flagrant violation of numerous treaties and agreements of international law and international humanitarian law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and numerous other binding and nonbinding UN and European instruments to which the Russian Federation is state party. The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture under the Council of Europe has identified the right to request medical examination by a doctor of one's choice as among the core rights enjoyed by a person in detention.

Mr. Navalny was originally detained on January 17<sup>th</sup> for failing to report to the probation officer during his life-saving recovery in Germany, a condition stipulated as part of an earlier non-custodial sentence. For this "violation" he was tried and sentenced to two years and eight months in a high-security prison

colony. His detention, subsequent imprisonment, and conviction amount to little more than an attempt to silence him for his political activism and dissent. It comes after a sustained campaign of persecution that has included multiple arrests, including one in 2014 when he was convicted of fraud in a case that the European Court of Human Rights called “arbitrary and manifestly unreasonable.

We urge you to:

- Immediately release Aleksei Navalny. He has committed no recognizable criminal offence and has been deprived of his liberty on the basis of being an outspoken critic of the Russian authorities;
- Immediately ensure that Aleksei Navalny receives the urgent medical care he requires, and in particular, that he is examined and prescribed treatment by health professionals of his choice, and that their prescribed treatment is provided to him, including at a civil medical institution, as required;
- Provide guarantees that while in detention Aleksei Navalny is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, including sleep deprivation or denial of required medical care; and
- Carry out an immediate, full, impartial, and effective investigation into the circumstances of Aleksei Navalny’s unfounded criminal prosecution and imprisonment, and the conditions of his detention. This investigation should examine reports of sleep deprivation and the denial of required medical treatment. All those responsible should be held to account.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 509-8132 or [dbalson@aiusa.org](mailto:dbalson@aiusa.org).

Sincerely,



Daniel Balson  
Advocacy Director, Europe & Central Asia  
Amnesty International USA