
Minister of Foreign Affairs Anniken Huitfeldt
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CC:

- Members of the Norwegian Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence
- Members of the Norwegian Parliament Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
- Members of the Norwegian Parliament delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

Oslo and London, 31 October 2022

Re: Request for targeted sanctions against 13 persons responsible for human rights violations against Russian politician and human rights activist Vladimir Kara-Murza

Foreign Minister Anniken Huitfeldt,

With this letter, we ask the Norwegian government to cooperate with like-minded governments to impose sanctions/restrictive measures against 13 individuals that have violated the internationally recognized human rights of the Russian politician and human rights activist Vladimir Kara-Murza. The [Canadian](#) government has decided to impose such sanctions, and there are currently [initiatives](#) within the EU to impose similar measures.

In the case that the EU's member states fail to reach an agreement on such sanctions, we request that Norway join forces with a group of like-minded states to impose similar sanctions as Canada has decided to put in place. This will be in line with the requirements of the Norwegian Sanctions Act, which in Section 2 stipulates that the Norwegian government can impose sanctions or restrictive measures against individuals if there is "broad international support"¹ for such measures.¹

¹ For a legal analysis of Norwegian Sanctions legislation, see the Norwegian Helsinki Committee: *The Norwegian Sanctions Act: Does it permit the Norwegian Government to become proactive in imposing human rights sanctions?* 3 October 2022 (<https://www.nhc.no/en/new-report-on-human-rights-sanctions/>).

Kara-Murza has an impressive track record of political and human rights activism, including many visits to Norway and cooperation with Norwegian parliamentarians and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee. He has been a frequent participant at the Oslo Freedom Forum and co-organized with Norwegian Parliamentarians and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee several events in the framework of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. In November 2021 he was the keynote speaker at the Norwegian Helsinki Committees Sakharov Freedom Award [event](#) in the Oslo City Hall. The speech he gave here about the legacy of Soviet persecution in today's Russia to an audience of Norwegian politicians, human rights defenders, and media representatives constitutes now one of three counts in the charge against him for treason.

According to former Canadian Justice Minister, Irwin Cotler, Kara-Murza is “the quintessential democrat”, always advocating for democratic values and respect for human rights to prevail. According to conservative estimates, there are [hundreds](#) of political prisoners in Russia, but Kara-Murza's case stands out. His case is unique in that he is charged with ‘treason’ only based on speeches criticizing Russian authorities. In his own words, “[My case](#) marks the first moment in post-Soviet Russia when public criticism of the authorities is officially clarified as “treason”.

In short, sanctioning those who are responsible for the imprisonment of Vladimir Kara-Murza will send a strong signal of support to political prisoners in Russia and beyond (and can be followed up with sanctions against those responsible in other cases of political imprisonment), as well as underline the special character of his case.

1. Profile of Vladimir Kara-Murza

Vladimir Vladimirovich Kara-Murza (Russian: Владимир Владимирович Кара-Мурза; born 7 September 1981) is a Russian politician, historian, journalist, author, filmmaker, and human rights defender. As a politician, he worked closely with the late [Boris Nemtsov](#), who was shot dead on a street close to the Kremlin on 27 February 2015.

Kara-Murza is a senior [advisor](#) of Human Rights First, and a [columnist](#) for the Washington Post. He is co-founder of the [Russian Anti-War Committee](#) established to oppose Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, Chair of the Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom, and [Senior Fellow](#) at the [Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights](#). He has served as vice-chairman of [Open Russia](#), which promotes civil society and democracy in Russia, was elected to the Coordinating Council of the Russian Opposition in 2012, and served as deputy leader of the People's Freedom Party from 2015 to 2016.

Kara-Murza played an important role in the lobbying and implementation of the Magnitsky Act which allows the US government to freeze the assets of Russian and other government officials deemed to be human rights offenders. He also played important roles in lobbying efforts for similar legislation in Canada, the UK, and the European Union. He has received several awards for his work, including the Magnitsky Human Rights Award; Sakharov Prize for Journalism as an Act of Conscience; Geneva Summit Courage Award; Train Foundation's Civil Courage Prize; Oxi Courage Award; Freedom, Democracy and Human Rights Prize from

the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes. The Council of Europe awarded him the [Václav Havel Human Rights Prize](#) in October 2022.

Kara-Murza has faced two attempts to kill him by poison, in 2015 and 2017. According to [investigations by Bellingcat](#), FSB agents were behind these attempts. He was arrested and jailed in April 2022 and has been charged with treason, as well as other charges, which could keep him behind bars for many years.

2. Human rights violations

Even though those responsible for the poisoning of Kara-Murza have not been identified and sentenced in a court of law, strong evidence suggests that they worked for the Federal Security Service (FSB). The poisoning, therefore, constituted violations of Kara-Murza's right to life, as defined by the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.² The lack of genuine investigation in the cases constituted a further violation of the right to an "effective remedy".³

It is therefore clear that Kara-Murza already in 2015 and 2017 was a victim of serious human rights violations. This letter argues, however, that the recent arrest and charges against him constitute new serious violations that should be met by firm actions by the international community, including by Norway and like-minded states imposing restrictive measures against those responsible for the violations.

Kara-Murza was arrested and imprisoned in April 2022 on charges of disobeying police orders. New charges have, however, been layered on top since then, including treason, which could see him serve more than 20 years in prison on conviction.

The three counts in the treason indictment are based on Kara-Murza's:

- [Address](#) to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly about the [illegitimacy](#) of Putin's term-limit waiver;
- [Speech](#) at the Norwegian Helsinki Committee award ceremony for Russian historian and political prisoner Yuri Dmitriev discussing repression in Putin's Russia; and
- [Testimony](#) before the U.S. Congress's Helsinki Commission on the pervasive media censorship imposed by Putin to hide the war crimes his forces are committing in Ukraine.

According to the [indictment](#), these speeches "threatened the security and constitutional order of the Russian Federation," "damaged the international reputation of the Russian

² Article 6 of the Covenant recognizes the individual's "inherent right to life" and requires it to be protected by law. It is a "supreme right" from which no derogation can be permitted and must be interpreted widely. It, therefore, requires parties, such as the Russian Federation, to take positive measures to reduce infant mortality and increase life expectancy, as well as forbidding and genuinely investigating arbitrary killings or attempted killings by security forces.

³ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 2(3)a.

Federation,” and gave Russia an “image as an aggressor state in the eyes of the international community.”

We maintain that these charges violate Kara-Murza’s right to freedom of expression, as guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Article 19. His speeches represent factual and legitimate criticism of the way Russia’s Constitution was changed to allow Putin’s third term as President, current repressive policies, failure to come to terms with the past, and the way Russia conducts its illegal (aggressive) war against Ukraine.

Unlike what is customary in actual treason cases, no foreign country benefited from his actions – the alleged subject instead is the [Free Russia Foundation](#), a US organization founded and led by a Russian activist Natalia Arno.

Contrary to the indictment, the speeches did not threaten “the security and constitutional order of the Russian Federation” as they did not propagate violence or contained any appeal for the Russian people to force the Russian leadership to resign. They *did* portray Russian actions and policies in negative ways, but Russia’s image abroad has been more effectively harmed by these actions than any speech can do. In addition, harming a country’s image abroad is not a legitimate ground under international law to restrict freedom of speech.

We, therefore, argue that also Article 9(1) of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights is violated in the case. This article guarantees everyone “... the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and by such procedure as are established by law.” He has been held in pre-trial detention without proper justification, in breach of Article 9(3).

The facts and circumstances of his case taken together, there is no doubt that Kara-Murza is a ‘political prisoner’. According to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), a person deprived of his or her personal liberty is to be regarded as a ‘political prisoner’:

- a. if the detention has been imposed in violation of one of the fundamental guarantees set out in the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols (ECHR), in particular, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression and information, freedom of assembly and association;
- b. if the detention has been imposed for purely political reasons without connection to any offence;
- c. if, for political motives, the length of the detention or its conditions are clearly out of proportion to the offence the person has been found guilty of or is suspected of;
- d. if, for political motives, he or she is detained in a discriminatory manner as compared to other persons; *or*,
- e. if the detention is the result of clearly unfair proceedings, and this appears to be connected with the political motives of the authorities.⁴

In Kara-Murza’s case, at least points a, b, c, and e, apply.

⁴ PACE, “The definition of political prisoner” (<http://bit.ly/2SLZNSs>).


Because of these human rights violations, which the Russian Federation is obliged to respect and uphold as a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (and other human rights treaties), we ask that the 13 persons responsible for the violations must be sanctioned in accordance with the Sanctions Act, *i.e.*, that Norway in cooperation with like-minded states impose ‘travel restrictions’, “financial sanctions” and any other restrictive measures it finds appropriate in accordance with Section 2 of the Act.

3. The responsible persons

Hermitage Capital Management, led by Bill Browder, has conducted an extensive investigation to identify and clarify the roles of the persons who are responsible for the human rights violations against Kara-Murza. In the attachment, we summarise the findings of these investigations.



Bill Browder
Head, Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign
CEO Hermitage Capital Management



Berit Lindeman
Secretary General NHC

Under the Sergei Magnitsky Act. Submission relates to Mr Vladimir Kara-Murza unlawful arrest and abuses

	Name, Russian		Name	DoB	Title	Organization	Role	Details	Extract from available material	Date	Item	Links
1	Ленская Елена Анатольевна	1	Lenskaya Elena Anatolievna (Ленская Елена Анатольевна)	22-Jan-79	Judge	Basmani District Court, Moscow	Approved the politically motivated arrest of Vladimir Kara-Murza for 2 months until 12 June 2022	Judge Lenskaya approved the arrest of Vladimir Kara-Murza on allegation of dissemination of "fake" information about the Russian Army bombing of civilians, hospitals, maternity houses, schools and the usage of banned methods of conducting war in Ukraine	<i>Lawyer for Vladimir Kara-Murza Vadim Prokhorov reported on his Facebook account: "Judge Lenskaya placed Vladimir Kara-Murza under arrest until 12 June 2022."</i>	22 April 2022	Court Order issued by Judge Lenskaya E.A.	Court Order issued by Judge Lenskaya E.A.
2	Мищенко Диана Игоревна	2	Mishchenko Diana Igorevna (maiden name:Garipova) (Мищенко Диана Игоревна)	12-May-77	Judge	Khamovniki District Court, Moscow	Issued the initial ruling to approve the administrative arrest of Vladimir Kara-Murza for 15 days, based on a groundless allegation of "disobedience to a lawful order and demand of a police officer"	Despite clear evidence that Vladimir Kara-Murza did not disobey the police order and did not try to escape, Judge Mishchenko approved the politically motivated arrest		12 April 2022	Court Order issued by judge Mishchenko D.A.	Court Order issued by judge Mishchenko D.A.
3	Козлов Илья Павлович	3	Kozlov Ilya Pavlovich (Козлов Илья Павлович)	17-Oct-73	Judge	Moscow City Court	Denied appeal of Vladimir Kara-Murza on the illegal administrative arrest	Denied all submissions made by Kara-Murza and his lawyer and ordered to remove Vladimir's mother from the courtroom		25 April 2022	Court Order issued by Judge Kozlov I.P.	Court Order issued by Judge Kozlov I.P.
4	Задачин Андрей Андреевич	4	Zadachin Andrei Andreevich (Задачин Андрей Андреевич)	22-Aug-90	Investigator of the Major Investigative Unit, Major	Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation	Opened politically motivated criminal case No 12202007703000328 against Vladimir Kara-Murza. Issued an arrest warrant for Vladimir Kara-Murza and supported it in court.	Issued politically motivated criminal accusation against Vladimir Kara-Murza claiming that he disseminated "fake" information about the Russian Army bombing of civilians, hospitals, maternity houses, schools and the usage of banned methods of conducting war in Ukraine. During the court hearing approving his request for Vladimir's arrest, he advocated for the arrest of Vladimir Kara-Murza stating that Vladimir's statements 'promoted political tensions', Vladimir is a British citizen, spends time in the USA, and is therefore a flight risk	<i>Order to Open Criminal Case against Vladimir Kara-Murza by Investigator Zadachin: "Vladimir Kara-Murza while in the building of the Arizona House of Representatives of the United States of America, in his public speech addressed to the members of the House, acted with the motives of political hatred, disseminated deliberately false information, disguised as reliable messages, containing data on the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation for the bombing of residential areas, social infrastructure facilities, including maternity hospitals, hospitals and schools, as well as on the use of other prohibited means and methods of war during a special military operation on the territory of Ukraine, which caused significant harm to the interests of the Russian Federation."</i>	12 April 2022	Police order to open criminal case against Vladimir Kara-Murza issued by Zadachin A.A.	Police order to open criminal case against Vladimir Kara-Murza issued by Zadachin A.A.
5	Колесников С.В.	5	Kolesnikov S.V. (Колесников С.В.)		Prosecutor	General Prosecutor's office	On 22 April 2022 he supported the request of investigator Zadachin A.A. to remand Vladimir Kara-Murza in custody under the criminal case concerning the circulation of allegedly false information about the activities of the Russian armed forces during a so-called "special operation"		<i>"Prosecutor Kolesnikov supported the motion to keep the suspect Kara-Murza (in custody until 12 June 2022 requesting it to be granted)"</i>	22 April 2022	Court Order issued by Judge Lenskaya E.A.	Court Order issued by Judge Lenskaya E.A.
6	Белоченко А.А.	6	Belyuchenko A.A. (Белоченко А.А.)		Police Sergeant	Khamovniki police precinct, Moscow	Filed a report with the Head of Khamovniki police precinct alleging disobedience by Vladimir Kara-Murza in response to a police request	According to this report, Vladimir Kara-Murza acted "inadequately by changing the trajectory of his movement and speeding up his pace"	<i>Report by Belyuchenko: On 11 April 2022 at 18:30 Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich disobeyed a lawful order / demand from a police officer, as well as hindered the performance of their duties. ... citizen Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich, at the sight of police officers, behaved inadequately by changing the trajectory of movements, speeding up his pace and, in response to the demand to stop, tried to run-away. During the arrest, he actively resisted, refusing to provide identification documents and proceed to a police car. Therefore, on April 11, 2022, citizen Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich, realizing the unlawful nature of his actions, committed an administrative offense, under part 1 of Article 19.3 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation "</i>	11 April 2022	Police Report issued 11 April 2022 issued by Belyuchenko A.A.	Police Report issued 11 April 2022 issued by Belyuchenko A.A.
7	Кириллов А.Н.	7	Kirillov A.N. (Кириллов А.Н.)		Senior police officer	Khamovniki police precinct, Moscow	Filed a report with the Head of Khamovniki police precinct alleging disobedience by Vladimir Kara-Murza in response to a police request	According to this report, Vladimir Kara-Murza acted "inadequately by changing the trajectory of his movement and speeding up his pace"	<i>Report by Kirillov: On 11 April 2022 at 18:30 Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich disobeyed a lawful order / demand from a police officer, as well as hindered the performance of their duties. ... citizen Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich, at the sight of police officers, behaved inadequately by changing the trajectory of movements, speeding up his pace and, in response to the demand to stop, tried to run-away. During the arrest, he actively resisted, refusing to provide identification documents and proceed to a police car. Therefore, on April 11, 2022, citizen Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich, realizing the unlawful nature of his actions, committed an administrative offense, under part 1 of Article 19.3 of the Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation "</i>	11 April 2022	Police Report issued 11 April 2022 issued by Kirillov A.N.	Police Report issued 11 April 2022 issued by Kirillov A.N.

8	Смирнов Михаил Алексеевич	8	Smirnov Mikhail Alekseevich (Смирнов Михаил Алексеевич)		Lieutenant colonel of Russian police	Head of Khamovniki police precinct, Moscow	Approved deliberately false police reports filed by Kirillov and Belyuchenko used to justify the politically-motivated detention of Vladimir Kara-Murza	Approved reports by two subordinates alleging Vladimir Kara-Murza acted "inadequately by changing the trajectory of his movement and speeding up his pace" used to detain Vladimir Kara-Murza	<i>Reports approved by Smirnov: On 11 April 2022 at 18:30 Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich disobeyed a lawful order / demand from a police officer, as well as hindered the performance of their duties. ... citizen Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich, at the sight of police officers, behaved inadequately by changing the trajectory of movements, speeding up his pace and, in response to the demand to stop, tried to run-away. During the arrest, he actively resisted, refusing to provide identification documents and proceed to a police car. Therefore, on April 11, 2022, citizen Kara-Murza Vladimir Vladimirovich, realizing the unlawful nature of his actions, committed an administrative offense, under part 1 of Article 19.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation "</i>	11 April 2022	Police Report issued 11 April 2022 issued by Kirillov A.N.	Police Report issued 11 April 2022 by Kirillov A.N.
9	Коптев Д.Л.	9	Koptev D.L. (Коптев Д.Л.)		Police office, Captain	Khamovniki Police precinct, Moscow	At 12 April 2022, issued a report on an administrative offence under article 19.3 (failure to obey a police officer) of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation		<i>On 12 April 2022, a police office of the Khamovniki Police precinct, Captain Koptev D.L., issued a report related to an administrative offence under part 1 of article 19.3 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation (failure to obey police officers)"</i>	25 April 2022	Court Order issued by Judge Kozlov I.P.	Court Order issued by Judge Kozlov I.P.
10	Михеев Данила Юрьевич	10	Mikheev Danila Yurievich (Михеев Данила Юрьевич)		Expert of "products of speech activity"	Acted on behalf of private company Chamber of legal experts	Issued an expert opinion on the speech of Vladimir Kara-Murza alleging it presented fake information as facts	Expert opinion on the speech of Vladimir Kara-Murza was relied upon to arrest and charge Vladimir Kara-Murza on politically-motivated charge of disseminating 'fake' facts	<i>Independent Russian news report: Danila Mikheev conducted an examination of Kara-Murza's English-language video and found it contained "fakes" about the Russian army. The publication writes that this time he acted as a private expert.</i>	22 April 2022	Court Order issued by Judge Lenskaya E.A.	Court Order issued by Judge Lenskaya E.A.
11	Седышев Андрей Геннадьевич	11	Sedyshev Andrei Gennadievich (Седышев Андрей Геннадьевич)	11-Feb-77	Judge	Ismailovo District Court, Moscow	Issued ruling to uphold the District court decision of 06 April 2021 imposing fine of 15,000 roubles on Vladimir Kara-Murza for his involvement in the activities of a foreign or international non-governmental organisation in relation to which a decision had been taken to declare its activities undesirable on the territory of the Russian Federation		<i>"the amount of evidence is sufficient to establish the guilt of Kara-Murza V.V. of committing an offence under Article 20.33 of the CAO RF (Participation in the activities of a foreign or international non-governmental organisation, in respect of which a decision was taken to declare its activities undesirable on the territory of the Russian Federation). The sentence of the Izmaylovo district court (Moscow) judge against Kara-Murza V.V. dated April 6, 2021 should be left unchanged".</i>	07 June 2021	Court Order issued by judge Sedyshev A.G.	Court Order issued by judge Sedyshev A.G.
12	Червонова Вера Николаевна	12	Chervonova Vera Nikolaevna (Червонова Вера Николаевна)	03-Sep-64	Senior Counsel of Justice, Senior Assistant to the Izmaylovo Inter-District Prosecutor's office	Ismailovo District Prosecutor's office, Moscow	At 21 June 2021, court hearing she requested to approve imposed fine of 15,000 roubles on Vladimir Kara-Murza for his involvement in the activities of a foreign or international non-governmental organisation, in relation to which a decision had been taken declaring its activities undesirable on the territory of the Russian Federation.		<i>"During the hearing she spoke in favour of upholding the judgment appealed against (by lawyer Vladimir Kara-Murza) on consideration of its lawfulness and reasoning".</i>	07 June 2021	Court Order issued by judge Sedyshev A.G.	Court Order issued by judge Sedyshev A.G.
13	Альпов Олег Викторович	13	Alypov Oleg Viktorovich (Альпов Олег Викторович)	07-Mar-81	Prosecutor	Preobrazhensky District Prosecutor's office, Moscow	At 13 March 2021, issued an order to recognise Vladimir Kara-Murza as a participant in the activities of a foreign or international non-governmental organisation with regard to which a decision had been taken declaring its activities undesirable on the territory of the Russian Federation.		<i>"The fact of the offence and V.V. Kara-Murza's guilt has been confirmed by: the ruling of the Preobrazhensky inter-district prosecutor of Moscow O.V. Alypov, describing the event of an administrative offence against V.V. Kara-Murza."</i>	07 June 2021	Court Order issued by judge Sedyshev A.G.	Court Order issued by judge Sedyshev A.G.