

Businessman Kozlov Released From Prison

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Jailed businessman Alexei Kozlov, whose freedom was among the demands of the recent opposition rallies in the Russian capital, was released from a prison in Central Russia's Ivanovo region on Monday evening, his lawyer said.

"Kozlov is about to be released. I'm waiting for him outside the penal colony," lawyer Alkhas Abgadzhas said.

The regional department of the Federal Penitentiary Service confirmed the release.

Kozlov was given eight years in prison in 2009 for fraud and "legalization of stolen property," or the use of illegally obtained property in otherwise legitimate business transactions. The investigators said he stole shares in a leather production company.

His supporters, including his wife, a celebrity journalist-turned-prisoner rights campaigner

Olga Romanova, claim the case was a fabrication by his business partner, ex-Russian Senator Vladimir Slutsker, who denied the allegations.

The Supreme Court ordered Kozlov's release and a retrial in 2011, but a district court in Moscow again found him guilty last year and sentenced him to five years in prison.

However, the Supreme Court ruled last month that the legalization of stolen property charge was unfounded. The Moscow City Court complied, dropping the charge last Friday and slashing the businessman's sentence to four years. Kozlov has already served four and a half years behind bars.

Kozlov intends to sue for damages for wrongful prosecution and also for the extra six months that he had spent in detention.

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