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Hooliganism Case Against Red Square Scrotum Artist Dropped

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Pyotr Pavlensky could get up to five years in prison for his protest action on Red Square.

Investigators have dropped the hooliganism case against an artist who nailed his scrotum to the cobblestones of Red Square in November due to a lack of evidence, his lawyer said.

Police said that artist Pyotr Pavlensky's actions were not motivated by a desire to incite hatred against any social or religious groups and that they exhibited no political, ideological, racial or ethnic agenda, the legal news wire reported Wednesday.

Instead, investigators concluded that Pavlensky's intent was "to show the socio-political situation in Russia in a metaphorical form," lawyer Ramil Akhmetgaliev said.

Pavlensky said soon after the demonstration that his purpose was to protest Russia's slide into a "police state" and the authorities' attempts to "turn the country into one big prison camp."

The artist-activist has gained notoriety for a variety of outlandish demonstrations over

the past few years.

In February he was detained in St. Petersburg for re-enacting a scene from street demonstrations in Ukraine in what was explained as a show of support for Kiev's Maidan protesters.

In July 2012 he organized a rally in support of Pussy Riot and sewed his mouth shut to protest the trial against the punk rock group, which saw three of its members get jail sentences the following month.

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