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Navalny and Khodorkovsky to Fund Russian Political Convicts

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Mikhail Khodorkovsky

Former Russian oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Russian opposition firebrand Alexei Navalny have launched a project titled "Help from Khodorkovsky and Navalny." As part of this project, they plan to give convicts prosecuted for political reasons 100,000 rubles ($1,492) apiece, Navalny wrote on his blog Monday.

"[We have] released the names of the first political convicts that will receive 100,000 rubles," his post said.

The list of convicts entitled to financial support published on the project's website consists of 22 names, including Navalny's brother Oleg, convicted to three years in prison for embezzlement; Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko, currently standing trial for allegedly murdering Russian journalists; Ukrainian film director Oleg Sentsov, sentenced to 20 years in maximum security prison for organizing terrorist attacks in Crimea.

Eligible convicts were selected by an expert council of 24 members, Navalny explained, with

only eight members appointed by him and Khodorkovsky. “Pay attention to this very important thing: neither I nor Khodorkovsky decide to whom we should assign the support,” he wrote on his blog.

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