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Germany: New Russia Sanctions 'Cannot Be Ruled Out'

The EU is weighing its response to the Navalny case. But the controversial Nord Stream 2 pipeline should still go ahead, Berlin says.

By AFP

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High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell will visit Moscow later this week. **John Thys / POOL / EPA / TASS**

Germany warned Wednesday that Russia may face further EU sanctions over the jailing of opposition figure Alexei Navalny.

"After this ruling, there will now also be talks among EU partners. Further sanctions cannot be ruled out," said Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert.

The ruling against the 44-year-old anti-corruption campaigner is "far off from

constitutional principles," said Seibert, reiterating Merkel's call for Moscow to free him.

Related article: Navalny Supporters Abroad Urge West to Get Serious About Sanctions

Nevertheless, Germany is maintaining its support for the controversial Nord Stream 2 pipeline with Russia.

Nord Stream 2 is a 10-billion-euro ($11-billion) pipeline that will run beneath the Baltic Sea and is set to double Russian natural-gas shipments to Germany, Europe's largest economy.

It has long been in the crosshairs of the United States, particularly by the former Trump administration which promoted U.S. gas and fiercely criticized European countries for their reliance on energy from Russia.

On Monday, France joined in a call urging Germany to scrap the pipeline, but Berlin said it was standing firm on the issue.

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