

Top Navalny Aide Urges EU to 'Go After' Putin's Money

By [AFP](#)

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Leonid Volkov, Navalny's regional network coordinator. [Ridus / Twitter](#)

A top aide of Alexei Navalny on Wednesday vowed to fight on despite the Russian opposition figure's imprisonment, saying the EU should respond by targeting President Vladimir "Putin's money."

Leonid Volkov, Navalny's regional network coordinator, told AFP he expected the jailing would boost the Kremlin critic's approval rating and followers despite a crackdown on protests.

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The jailing was "part of our strategy," said Volkov, speaking in English in a video call.

Volkov, who also managed Navalny's presidential campaign in 2018, said he was now in touch

with European institutions and governments about possible sanctions on Russia over his incarceration.

"I am, so to say, Navalny's foreign minister," Volkov said.

"The strategy should be to go after the money. There is a lot of (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's money in Europe," he said.

"The rebuttal should focus on this money. Go after money, seize assets of Putin's closest friends, allies, of Putin's oligarchs," he said.

Germany on Wednesday warned that Russia may face further EU sanctions over Navalny's detention.

Navalny has repeatedly accused Putin of personal enrichment at the expense of Russian taxpayers.

Most recently, he claimed a palace worth \$1.5 billion had been built for Putin by the oligarchs.

Volkov was speaking from Baltic eurozone member Lithuania, where he is currently living.

Russian prosecutors on Friday said he had been put on a wanted list on charges of allegedly encouraging minors to attend protests.

Volkov brushed off the charges as "made up," saying the Navalny campaign had never specifically encouraged minors to go out and protest.

Navalny aides have been detained all over Russia in recent days in an attempt by the authorities to clamp down on anti-government protests that have brought thousands onto the streets.

Volkov said he managed around 180 employees in 40 offices across Russia for Navalny's opposition movement and preparations were still underway for parliamentary elections in September.

Navalny's movement is aiming to unseat the ruling United Russia party, which has seen its approval ratings slide in recent years.

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