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Key Navalny Associate Leaves Russia, Citing Arrest Fears

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Vladimir Milov **Halifax International Security Forum**

One of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's key allies announced Sunday that he has left Russia for Europe out of fear of being arrested.

Vladimir Milov's announcement comes days after Russian prosecutors asked a court to label Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) and his regional network as "extremist" organizations. The move would outlaw the groups in Russia and could result in jail time for their members or even supporters.

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"We consulted with our colleagues and decided that it is better for me not to be arrested now, because my area of work is very important," Milov said in a live webcast from the Navalny Live YouTube channel.

Milov made his announcement alongside Leonid Volkov, Navalny's regional network coordinator who left the country in 2019 after investigators opened a criminal money-laundering case against the FBK.

Navalny's team has called on supporters to take to the streets Wednesday in a last-ditch effort to save Navalny's life as he continues hunger-striking to demand proper medical treatment in prison. The opposition figure's doctors warn that the jailed Kremlin critic could die from cardiac arrest any minute.

Previous pro-Navalny protests on Jan. 23 and Jan. 31 led to mass detentions of protesters and the house arrests of several top Navalny associates.

Milov said that during the January protests, police officers had been in his apartment building without entering his actual apartment. Pointing to when he was detained and arrested for 30 days during the protests of summer 2019, Milov said it was only a matter of time before the same thing happened again.

Milov said that he will work to increase international pressure on the Russian authorities while abroad.

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