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Team Navalny Says Relaunching Regional Network to Resist War, Mobilization

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Peter Kovalev / TASS

Associates of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny on Tuesday said they are relaunching his regional political network to fight against Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent "partial" mobilization ordered by President Vladimir Putin.

"It's time for us to restore our network to fight mobilization and war," said Ivan Zhdanov, the former director of Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation, in a video published on social media by Navalny's chief of staff Leonid Volkov on Tuesday.

Navalny's political network, which at one point had 50 regional headquarters across Russia, was disbanded last year after a Moscow court outlawed it as an "extremist" organization.

But in the wake of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and last month's mobilization of thousands of Russians to bolster Russia's faltering war effort, Volkov declared that the network was

reopening to fight precisely those issues.

“Putin has brought war and suffering to every Russian family in every home,” Volkov said in the video.

Zhdanov, who like Volkov is living in exile to avoid criminal prosecution, pledged that the new group would be a “partisan underground” movement inside Russia, and called on citizens to resist the Kremlin and work with the group.

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“The fight can take on a variety of different forms and extremes,” Volkov said. “You can spread information, provide legal assistance, volunteer, or sabotage the work of military enlistment offices.”

After Kremlin crackdowns on Russia’s parliamentary opposition over the past decade, Navalny's movement had become Russia's most potent opposition force.

Despite serving a nine-year prison sentence on charges his allies call trumped up. Navalny has been one of the loudest voices opposing Moscow’s invasion of its neighbor.

Tuesday’s call looks to reach Russians beyond the jailed Kremlin critic’s existing supporters by appealing to anyone opposed to the war and mobilization.

“We will be glad for all people, both those cautious and those that are the most desperate, it does not matter to us where you are from or where you work, the main thing is that you are against this war and this government,” Volkov said.

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