

Yandex Co-Founder Arkady Volozh Condemns 'Barbaric' War in Ukraine

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Arkady Volozh, founder of Yandex. **Alexander Miridonov / Kommersant**

Arkady Volozh, the co-founder of Russia's Yandex tech giant, condemned the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine on Thursday following backlash for his apparent attempt to distance himself from Russia on his personal website.

"I am categorically against Russia's barbaric invasion of Ukraine," Volozh said in a statement [shared](#) with The Bell news website, adding that he was horrified by the fact that "homes of Ukrainians are being bombed every day."

"I understand that I also share responsibility for the country's actions," Volozh said.

Volozh, 59, drew criticism this week after he [identified](#) himself as a "Kazakhstan-born Israeli tech entrepreneur" who "has been living in Israel" since 2015 on his personal website.

He announced his resignation from Yandex in June 2022, shortly after he was [targeted](#) by European Union sanctions in response to Yandex's role in "promoting state media and

narratives in its search results” and removing “content related to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.”

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Often dubbed “Russia's Google,” Yandex is the largest Russian search engine and also encompasses e-commerce, taxi, fast food delivery and other services.

Following the invasion of Ukraine, Yandex faced accusations of suppressing independent news sources in its search results as the Kremlin clamped down on information relating to the war that clashed with its own narrative.

The company was split into two entities — a company overseeing operations in Russia and a second, Western-oriented, Amsterdam-based firm — following Western sanctions.

Volozh is at least the fourth prominent Russian businessman to speak out against the Kremlin's war, following U.K.-based banking tycoons [Mikhail Fridman](#), [Petr Aven](#) and [Oleg Tinkov](#).

His statement comes nearly a year and a half into the war.

“Well, what took you so long? I guess you had to settle some business,” a longtime Kremlin official told The Moscow Times on condition of anonymity.

“Volozh has long been trying to be sly, in particular, trying not to listen to our wishes regarding the search engine results. No matter, we always managed to convince him,” the official said.

In his statement Thursday, Volozh said “There were many reasons why I had to remain silent.”

“You can argue about the timeline of my statement, but not about its substance. I am against war,” Volozh said.

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