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Russia Arrests Pussy Riot Co-Founder Tolokonnikova in Absentia

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Nadya Tolokonnikova. **Jeremy Hogan / SOPA Images via ZUMA Press Wire / TACC**

A Moscow court has ordered the arrest of leading Pussy Riot member Nadya Tolokonnikova in absentia, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported on Tuesday.

Tolokonnikova, 34, the feminist protest and performance art group's co-founder, was charged with insulting the religious feelings of believers, RIA Novosti said, without providing further details.

The activist, who currently resides outside Russia, faces a two-month arrest upon crossing the Russian border or extradition back to Russia, Interfax said, citing the court.

The criminal probe into Tolokonnikova was reportedly prompted by a social media post in which she allegedly expressed "clear disrespect for society" and showed actions that had been "committed in order to insult the religious feelings of believers," the RBC business daily said last year.

Tolokonnikova was convicted of "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred" alongside fellow Pussy Riot members Maria Alyokhina and Yekaterina Samutsevich in August 2012 over their impromptu protest performance against President Vladimir Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church inside Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral.

She was subsequently sentenced to two years in prison but was released in December 2013 as part of a general amnesty.

Tolokonnikova was added to Russia's list of so-called "foreign agents" in December 2021.

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