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Russian Duma Speaker Blames U.S., EU for Navalny's Death

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The speaker of Russia's lower house of parliament has claimed without evidence Friday that U.S. and EU leaders were responsible for the death of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

"Washington and Brussels are to blame for Navalny's death," Vyacheslav Volodin wrote on the Telegram messaging app hours after prison authorities in the Russian Arctic announced Navalny's death at age 47.

Volodin said the "copycat accusations by the heads of unfriendly states" that the Kremlin may be involved demonstrated their own culpability.

"Who benefits from Navalny's death today?" the State Duma speaker asked, a refrain that pro-Kremlin figures often use after the deaths of high-profile opposition activists.

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Volodin claimed the “obvious” culprits were Western leaders who sanctioned Russia for its invasion of Ukraine and “have no chance of winning elections but still want to hold on to power.”

“All their names are known: from the Secretary General of NATO and the U.S. leadership to [German Chancellor Olaf] Scholz, [British Prime Minister Rishi] Sunak and [Ukrainian President Volodymyr] Zelensky — they’re the perpetrators of Navalny’s death,” Volodin said.

“It is they who made a huge number of ill-fated decisions and cling to their positions who benefit from his death,” he added.

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