

Putin Bears 'Criminal' Blame for Navalny's Death, EU Lawmakers Say

By [AFP](#)

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Navalny attending a court hearing via video link. **AP / TASS**

The European Parliament said Thursday that Russian President Vladimir Putin bore "criminal and political responsibility" for the death of opposition activist Alexei Navalny and should be held to account.

Navalny, one of Putin's most vocal critics, died in prison on Feb. 16 in unclear circumstances but EU leaders have blamed the Russian leader.

"The Russian government and Vladimir Putin personally bear criminal and political responsibility for the death of their most prominent opponent, Alexei Navalny," the EU parliament said in a resolution passed with 506 votes in the 705-seat assembly.

Only nine lawmakers voted against the resolution.

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EU lawmakers also called for an "independent and transparent international investigation" into the circumstances of Navalny's death.

In addition, the parliament asked the EU's 27 member states to "intensify" support for Russian political prisoners and continue backing the democratic opposition in Russia.

Navalny's funeral will be held on Friday at a Russian Orthodox church in southeastern Moscow.

His widow, Yulia Navalnaya, told the European Parliament on Wednesday that she feared the public memorial service could be disrupted by police arrests of mourners.

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