

Telegram Founder Durov Says Arrest in France 'Misguided'

By [AFP](#)

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Pavel Durov. tuckercarlson.com

Telegram founder and chief executive Pavel Durov on Thursday hit out at French authorities for arresting and charging him last month over the publication of extremist and illegal content on the popular messaging app.

In a lengthy post on Telegram, his first public remarks since his arrest, Durov said it was "surprising" that he was being held responsible for other people's content.

"Using laws from the pre-smartphone era to charge a CEO with crimes committed by third parties on the platform he manages is a misguided approach," he said.

He also lashed out at claims that "Telegram is some sort of anarchic paradise" as "absolutely untrue," insisting that the platform works to "take down millions of harmful posts and channels every day."

Durov denied accusations that France had not received responses from Telegram to its requests, saying he had personally helped French authorities "establish a hotline with Telegram to deal with the threat of terrorism in France."

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But striking a more conciliatory tone at the end of his message, Durov said Telegram's soaring user numbers, which he said were at 950 million worldwide, "caused growing pains that made it easier for criminals to abuse our platform."

"That's why I made it my personal goal to ensure we significantly improve things in this regard," he said, adding that this was being worked out "internally" and more details would be shared in the future.

"I hope that the events of August will result in making Telegram — and the social networking industry as a whole — safer and stronger," the tech entrepreneur said.

He said that when Telegram could not agree on the "right balance between privacy and security" with local regulators, then "we are ready to leave that country."

Durov, 39, was arrested on Aug. 24 at Le Bourget airport outside Paris and later charged with several counts of failing to curb extremist and illegal content on Telegram.

He was granted conditional release on a bail of five million euros (\$5.5 million), and he must report to a police station twice a week and remain in France.

An enigmatic figure who rarely speaks in public, Durov is a citizen of Russia, France and the United Arab Emirates, where Telegram is based.

Forbes magazine estimates his current fortune at \$15.5 billion, though he proudly promotes the virtues of an ascetic life that includes ice baths and not drinking alcohol or coffee.

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