

Navalny Family Mulls Taking France To European Court – Lawyer

By [AFP](#)

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The family of late Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny is considering taking France to the European Court of Human Rights in a case that implicates French cosmetics firm Yves Rocher, a lawyer said on Tuesday.

In 2014, Navalny and his brother Oleg were found guilty of fraud and money laundering via their transport and logistics firm which was working with Yves Rocher.

The brothers later took Yves Rocher to court in France over alleged false accusations but their complaint was dismissed by the courts.

"We are considering taking the case to the European Court of Human Rights," said William Bourdon, who represents Navalny's family.

"It was our duty to go all the way with his wife, in memory of Alexei," he said, referring to the

opposition politician's widow Yulia Navalnaya.

In 2013, Russian investigators accused the Navalny brothers of "stealing" and laundering millions of rubles from Yves Rocher and a Russian firm.

Related article: [Yves Rocher Rebuffs Criticism Over Role in Navalny Affair](#)

The indictment followed a protracted investigation, which Navalny dismissed as persecution over his political activities.

Oleg served three-and-a-half years in prison and was released in 2018, while Alexei received a three-and-a-half-year suspended sentence.

Yves Rocher, one of the first foreign cosmetics brands to enter Russia in 1991 after the Soviet Union's demise, eventually acknowledged publically that it had sustained "no damage" in the money laundering case.

But in 2021, Russian authorities used the old embezzlement charges to jail Navalny. He died three years later in unclear circumstances, with his family saying he was killed on President Vladimir Putin's orders.

"I'm in jail due to a criminal complaint by a French company," Navalny said in 2022, referring to Yves Rocher.

In 2017, the European Court of Human Rights denounced the Russian court for its original ruling that was "arbitrary and manifestly unreasonable," ordering that the brothers be paid 83,000 euros (\$93,000) in damages and costs.

Alexei and Oleg Navalny then filed a false accusation complaint in the western French city of Vannes, not far from Yves Rocher's headquarters, and an inquiry was opened in 2019.

"We do believe that we will find here a real and fair justice which unfortunately we cannot find in Russia," Alexei Navalny said at the time.

However, French judges eventually dropped the inquiry, and on Tuesday, the Court of Cassation, the highest court of the French judicial system, upheld the decision after an appeal by Navalny's family.

"We are disappointed that the Vannes court was too cautious, which benefited Yves Rocher," said Bourdon.

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