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Russian Opposition Holds Protest in Berlin Against Ukraine War

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Leading members of the Russian opposition including Vladimir Kara-Murza, Ilya Yashin and Yulia Navalnaya at the protest in Berlin. **Anastasia Tenisheva / MT**

BERLIN — Russian exiles and opposition activists gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest against Russia's war in Ukraine, marking another demonstration following the third anniversary of the full-scale invasion.

The protest — organized by Yulia Navalnaya, the widow of the late opposition leader Alexei Navalny, along with prominent opposition politicians Ilya Yashin and Vladimir Kara-Murza — drew around 500 people, who gathered at Potsdamer Platz and marched through the city center.

People chanted "No to war!," "Freedom to political prisoners!" and "Navalny" — who was buried last year on March 1. They also carried signs with photos and names of Russian political prisoners.

The demonstration took place a day after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky clashed with his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump over efforts to start peace talks with the Kremlin.

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During the clash, which played out in front of U.S. and international media, Trump told his Ukrainian counterpart that he would have no "cards" without the United States and accused him of "gambling with World War Three."

At the Berlin rally, Russian opposition politician Yashin called what took place in the Oval Office between Zelensky and Trump “a disgrace.”

“The war must not end in a backroom deal or a Munich-style agreement, it must end with a just peace, with security guarantees and with Putin behind bars,” Yashin said.

Unlike the previous anti-war demonstration in Berlin in November 2024, this protest saw many people carrying the tricolor — the official flag of the Russian Federation — which some associate with the war and the Kremlin.

Others argued that the tricolor belongs to all Russians, including those who oppose the war.

“I don’t quite understand why we should surrender the tricolor to murderers, aggressors, and scoundrels,” said veteran human rights defender Oleg Orlov, one of the 16 prisoners freed by Russia on Aug. 1 as part of a prisoner exchange between Moscow and the West.

Another notable aspect of the protest was the participation of the Russian Volunteer Corps, a far-right military unit fighting alongside the Ukrainian army against Russian forces.

Around two dozen members of the Russian Volunteer Corps chanted “Peace to Ukraine, Slavs united” and “To the walls of the Kremlin — no step back.”

The protesters later marched past the Russian Embassy in Berlin.

Navalnaya, widow of Alexei Navalny, greeted the audience and thanked those gathered. The crowd responded with loud cheers and applause.

"I will fight for you all the time, fight for those Russians who are against Putin and against the war,” she told the demonstrators.

“We must fight not only here but all around the world."

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