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France Denies Telegram Founder Durov's Request to Visit U.S. – Politico

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Pavel Durov. **Thomas Samson / AFP**

French authorities rejected a request from Telegram founder and Russian-born entrepreneur Pavel Durov to visit the United States, Politico reported Tuesday, citing the Paris prosecutor's office.

"Such a trip abroad did not appear imperative or justified," the office was quoted as saying.

Durov, who was banned from leaving France last year after being indicted on multiple charges linked to alleged illicit activity on Telegram, reportedly sought to visit the U.S. for "negotiations with investment funds."

The Paris prosecutor's office told Politico that it denied the entrepreneur's request on May 12. Authorities had allowed Durov to travel to Dubai earlier this year.

Related article: Telegram Founder Durov Says He Rejected Western Request to 'Silence'

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Durov, who now holds citizenship in France and the United Arab Emirates, was arrested in Paris last year after being accused of failing to curb extremist and terrorist content on Telegram.

The Russian-born entrepreneur was released on bail but prohibited from leaving the country. In addition to the travel ban, he was expected to post 5 million euros in bail and report to police twice a week.

Since his arrest, Durov has voiced criticism against the French government.

On Sunday, he claimed that authorities in Paris sought to censor conservative political voices in Romania ahead of its presidential election. France's Foreign Ministry denied the allegations.

Telegram reported more than 1 billion monthly active users in March.

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