

Interior Ministry Issues Arrest Warrant for Indigenous Activist Sargylana Kondakova

May 21, 2025



Sargylana Kondakova. **Courtesy photo**

Russian law enforcement authorities issued an arrest warrant for Sargylana Kondakova, a Yukaghir activist and co-founder of the exiled anti-war group Free Yakutia Foundation, media [reported](#) Wednesday.

Kondakova, who currently lives in Australia, said she learned of the warrant for her arrest from journalists at the exiled news website Mediazona, which monitors the Russian Interior Ministry's wanted list.

“I have not received any official notification or information about criminal charges being pressed against me,” Kondakova told The Moscow Times. “Given my public anti-war and human rights activities, I assume this is a politically motivated case.”

Russia’s Justice Ministry labeled Kondakova a “foreign agent” in August 2023. She believes

the arrest warrant could stem from alleged noncompliance with Russia's "foreign agent" law or her public criticism of the war in Ukraine.

Related article: [Leading Yakutian Activist Refuses to Give Up on Region's Free Future](#)

Authorities previously fined Kondakova for violations of the "foreign agent" and "army fakes" laws, as well as for reposting content from media outlets designated as "undesirable."

A native of Russia's Far East republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Kondakova co-founded the Free Yakutia Foundation in exile shortly after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The group has since become the region's largest Indigenous-led anti-war movement.

Free Yakutia says it has helped hundreds of conscientious objectors avoid military service to Ukraine, supported dozens of persecuted activists and led an online counter-propaganda campaign against regional authorities in Sakha.

Russia designated Free Yakutia a "foreign agent" in June 2023, [banned](#) it as an "extremist" organization last July and later [added](#) it to a list of "terrorist" entities that [includes](#) more than 170 Indigenous, ethnic and decolonial groups.

"This pressure [from the authorities], of course, comes with real risks — but it will not stop me or the foundation's work," Kondakova told The Moscow Times. Free Yakutia "will continue to speak the truth about the war, about human rights violations and the plight of Indigenous people" in Russia.

"The persecution is merely further proof that our work touches on issues that are sensitive for the regime," she added.

Original url:

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