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Freed in Prisoner Swap, Kara-Murza Again Declared Wanted by Russia

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Vladimir Kara-Murza. **Jean-Francois Badias/AP/TASS**

Russia's Interior Ministry has issued an arrest warrant for prominent Kremlin critic Vladimir Kara-Murza, the exiled news website Mediazona reported on Monday, though the exact charges against him remain unknown.

Kara-Murza, 44, had been serving a 25-year prison sentence for treason and other charges when he was released last summer as part of the largest prisoner swap between Russia and the West since the Cold War.

In August, Russian lawmakers said law enforcement authorities would press terrorism and extremism charges against Kara-Murza, as well as prominent opposition activists Yulia Navalnaya and Ilya Yashin, for staging an anti-war rally in Berlin earlier this year.

Mediazona, citing the Interior Ministry's wanted persons database, reported that police put out an arrest warrant for Kara-Murza. The charges against him were not specified.

Both Kara-Murza and Yashin were designated as terrorists later on Monday, state media reported.

Related article: An Open Letter to Vladimir Kara-Murza: Don't Spread Racist Myths About Indigenous Peoples

In August, Kara-Murza accused the Russian Embassy in Washington of refusing to issue him a new passport in what he described as a revival of the Soviet-era practice of stripping dissidents of citizenship.

Kara-Murza was arrested in April 2022 after he publicly criticized the full-scale invasion of Ukraine and pressed Western countries to impose sanctions against Russia.

The following year, he was sentenced to serve 25 years in a maximum-security prison, one of the longest prison sentences handed down to a Russian opposition figure in recent years.

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