

The Human Rights Center “Memorial” Considers Oleg Navalny a Political Prisoner

On December 30th, 2014, judge Elena Korobchenko of the Zamoskvoretsky district court pronounced her sentence for Alexei and Oleg Navalny. Alexei received 3 years and 6 months of suspended imprisonment and 5 years of probation as well as a fine of 500,000 rubles; his brother received the same fine and period of imprisonment, but in a corrective penal colony. The Navalny brothers were convicted of violation of part 3 article 159 (large-scale fraud), part 3 article 159.4 (fraud of an especially large scale in the sphere of business activity), and clause “a” part 2 page 174.1 (the legalization of monetary funds acquired as a result of the committing of a crime, on a large scale) of the Criminal code of the Russian Federation.

The Human Rights Center “Memorial” earlier announced that it considers the criminal prosecution of Alexei and Oleg Navalny in connection with the activity of the open joint-stock company “Main Subscription Agency” politically motivated and unlawful.

On one hand, this position is based upon the fact that an obvious political motive is traceable in this criminal prosecution: the cessation of Alexei’s public activity, thus the elimination of the threats that his activity created for the present authorities.

On the other hand, in our opinion, the actions of the Navalny brothers lacked the constitution of a crime. It was usual economic activity; debates about which could and should have been resolved in civil proceedings. But the individuals, declared “victims,” did not bring forth any such claims, and the criminal case was in fact instigated not by their own initiative, but by that of the Investigatory Committee of the Russian Federation.

After the unlawful issuing of an injunction to Alexei Navalny in the form of his home arrest, the Human Rights Center Memorial recognized him as a political prisoner (<http://www.memo.ru/d/153769.html>).

An investigation of the criminal case in the Zamoskvoretsky district court of Moscow additionally confirmed the correctness of the Human Rights Center “Memorial’s” position, convincingly proving the innocence of the Navalny brothers.

The court prescribed Oleg’s punishment in the form of the deprivation of his freedom; the convicted was taken into custody. These conditions give the grounds to consider him politically imprisoned and the deprivation of his freedom unlawful. Additional evidence for this include the circumstances of the announcement of his sentence: his sentencing, followed by the announcement of only the operative part, then the seizure of Oleg Navalny into custody in the absence of a full text of his sentence even before its entry into legal force, in defiance of the direct ban on the implementation of the holding in custody of those accused of economic crimes.

We demand the release of Oleg Navalny!

More information can be found [here](#).