

7 May 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the undersigned organisations and individuals, express our solidarity with Ivan Pavlov, a Russian human rights activist and lawyer, who has been charged under Article 310 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code which makes it a crime to disclose data of a preliminary investigation which has been declared secret.

Pavlov was detained on Friday, 30 April 2021, and, although he was later released by order of a judge, he has been banned from using the telephone or Internet. His hotel room in Moscow and home were also searched by Russia's Federal Security Services (FSB), the main organisation to emerge as a successor to the KGB. Breach of Article 310 can lead to a fine or harsher sanctions, such as corrective labour for a term of up to two years. But the real aim may be simply to ban Pavlov from working as a lawyer.

It is not difficult to understand this as a possible motivation for the Russian authorities, given Pavlov's long-standing and effective career as a human rights advocate. Among other things, he heads Team 29, a legal defence organisation that is named after the article in the Russian Constitution which guarantees freedom of expression and the right to access information held by public authorities or the right to information. Pavlov has also been an active member for many years of the Freedom of Information Advocates Network ([FOIANet](#)), the leading global network of right to information activists.

The most immediate reason for the Russian authorities going after Pavlov was likely Team 29's role in defending Alexey Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) and campaign offices against criminal accusations of advocating extremism. Those charges represent an expansion of the crackdown against Navalny, who was imprisoned immediately following his return to Russia in January 2021. The measures against Pavlov are especially concerning since, until now, lawyers had largely been free to defend their clients, even as government measures against the opposition have intensified.

There is perhaps a certain irony to Pavlov being charged under Article 310 given his consistent struggle against undue secrecy, including in the criminal justice system. Indeed, just the day before he was charged Pavlov accused the authorities of abusing secrecy rules in the extremism case and filed a legal case to declare those materials public.

These actions against Pavlov represent a blatant abuse of his rights to freedom of expression and criminal due process, as well as, more generally, the rule of law, including respect for the independence of lawyers. We call on members of the international community to do all that they can to defend Pavlov's rights and, by extension, those of all Russians.

1. Access Info Europe, Spain

2. Access to Information Commission of Afghanistan
3. Access to Information Programme (AIP), Bulgaria
4. Advocacy and Policy Institute (API), Secretariat of the CSO Access to Information Working Group, Cambodia
5. Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC), Uganda
6. African Centre for Media & Information Literacy (AFRICMIL), Nigeria
7. Albanian Media Institute, Albania
8. Alexander Kashumov, Attorney-at-Law and Head of Legal Team, Access to Information Programme, Bulgaria
9. Dr. Andrew Scott, Associate Professor, Department of Law, London School of Economics
10. Annepeters Global Humanitarian Foundation, Nigeria
11. Anti-Corruption Organization (AWTAD), Yemen
12. ARTICLE 19, United Kingdom
13. Association of Caribbean Media Workers
14. Bashir Ahmad, Advocate, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir, India
15. Biplob Karmakar, Bangladesh
16. Campaign for Freedom of Information, United Kingdom
17. Campaign for Freedom of Information in Scotland
18. Care for the Elderly Intellectuals, Azerbaijan
19. Center for Media Studies and Peacebuilding (CEMESP), Liberia
20. Centre for Independent Journalism, Malaysia
21. Centre for Law and Democracy, Canada
22. Centre for Media Freedom, Morocco
23. Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), Pakistan
24. Citizens Network Watchdog Poland
25. Codru Vrabie, Independent Trainer and Consultant, Romania
26. Community Development Initiative (CDI), Nigeria
27. Community Media Solutions, United Kingdom
28. David A. Schulz, Media Freedom & Information Access Clinic, United States
29. DigitalSENSE Africa, Nigeria
30. Diritto Di Sapere, Italy
31. Eduardo Bertoni, Former Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression at the Organization of American States, Argentina
32. ePanstwo Foundation, Poland
33. European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
34. Fabiano Angélico, Anticorruption and Transparency Researcher, Brazil
35. Dr. Felisa Tibbitts, Chair in Human Rights Education, Utrecht University (Netherlands)
36. Fernanda San Martin Carrasco, Former MP, Bolivia
37. Free Press Unlimited (FPU), the Netherlands
38. Freedom Forum, Nepal
39. Forum Informationsfreiheit, Austria
40. Fundación Ciudadano 12, Chile
41. Gabriela Morales Martínez, Researcher and Professor, México

42. Gergana Jouleva, FOI Advocate and Executive Director of Access to Information Programme, Bulgaria
43. Gregory Michener, Professor, FGV-EBAPE, Rio de Janeiro, Director, Public Transparency Program FGV, Brazil
44. Halim, Barrister-at-Law, Chairman, CCB Foundation, RTI Activist, Author of Book on Bangladesh RTI Commission
45. Human Rights Monitoring Institute, Lithuania
46. IFEX, Canada
47. Indonesian Center for Women Development (P3I - ICWD)
48. Institute for Research, Advocacy and Development (IRADA), Pakistan
49. Institute for Development of Freedom of Information, Georgia
50. Institute of Transparency, Access to Public Information, Personal Data Protection and Accountability, Mexico City
51. International Media Support, Denmark
52. James L. Turk, Director, Centre for Free Expression, Ryerson University, Canada
53. Jammu & Kashmir RTI Foundation, India
54. Jammu & Kashmir Right to Information Movement, India
55. K-Monitor, Hungary
56. Ken Rubin, Investigative Researcher and FOI/RTI User, Canada
57. Kishali Pinto-Jayawardena, Lawyer & Columnist, Sri Lanka
58. Kory Africa, Cameroon and United States
59. Legal Awareness for Nigerian Women, Nigeria
60. Lorelei Kelly, Pro-democracy Activist, United States
61. Maeve McDonagh, Emeritus Professor, Ireland
62. Michael Karanicolas, Executive Director, UCLA Institute for Technology, Law & Policy, United States
63. Media Diversity Institute (MDI), United Kingdom
64. Media Rights Agenda (MRA), Nigeria
65. Megan Waugh, Postgraduate Researcher, University of Leeds, United Kingdom
66. Mogens Schmidt, Former Director at UNESCO, Denmark
67. Movement for Freedom of Information, Israel
68. MuckRock, United States
69. Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, Social Activist and RTI Campaigner, India
70. Nawa-I-Ahmed Pur Sharqia, Daily Newspaper, Pakistan
71. Network for affirmation NGO Sector (Mreza Za Afirmaciju Nevladinog Sektora, MANS), Montenegro
72. Nurul Alam Masud, Chief Executive, Participatory Research Action Network (PRAAN), Bangladesh
73. Oldrich Kuzilek, Consultant for the Right to Information, Czech Republic
74. Open Knowledge Foundation Germany
75. Participatory Research Action Network (PRAAN), Bangladesh
76. Patricia Jonason, Law Professor, Sweden
77. Press Institute of Mongolia
78. Redouane Bosnina, Club of Judicial Officers, Morocco
79. Rural Area Development Programme (RADP), Nepal

80. Rural Infrastructure and Human Resource Development Organisation (RIHRDO), Pakistan
81. Rural Media Network Pakistan (RMNP)
82. Said Essoulami, Media Freedom and Access to Information Consultant, Morocco
83. Save the Climate, Democratic Republic of the Congo
84. Dr. Shamsul Bari, Barrister-at-Law and Right to Information Activist, Bangladesh
85. Society for Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Development (SEED), Nigeria
86. Dr. Sonia Randhawa, Media Freedom Advocate, Malaysia
87. Stanley Tromp, Journalist, FOI expert, Author of Fallen Behind: Canada's Access to Information Act in the World Context, Canada
88. Suma Ciudadana, Peru
89. Tanzania Citizens' Information Bureau
90. Taranath Dahal, RTI Activist and Senior Journalist, Nepal
91. The Accountability Network, Mexico
92. The Daphne Caruana Galizia Foundation, Malta
93. Toby McIntosh, Eyeonglobaltransparency.net, United States
94. Tom Blanton, National Security Archive, George Washington University, United States
95. Transparency International
96. Vikas Prakash Joshi, Freelance Journalist, Writer and FOI Professional, India
97. Women in Media Communication Initiative (WIM), Nigeria
98. Zahid Abdullah, Human Rights, Right to Information and Disabled Rights Activist, Pakistan