Dear President,

**Re: Aleksei Navalny’s health and life in danger**

I am extremely concerned at the unlawful detention of opposition politician and anti-corruption activist**Aleksei Navalny** who was arrested on 17 January 2021 and sent to a penal colony for two-and-a-half-years for “violation of terms of a suspended sentence”.

**Aleksei Navalny’s**detention is unlawful, arbitrary and politically motivated. The European Court of Human Rights found the original conviction “arbitrary and manifestly unreasonable” and subsequently called on the Russian authorities to release **Aleksei Navalny** immediately. So far, the orders of the Court have been ignored.

**Aleksei Navalny’s** health has dramatically worsened in the short time he has been imprisoned. It has been reported that the prison authorities have woken him from sleep every hour with unnecessary night “checks”, robbing him of sleep. Despite many demands, he has been denied adequate medical care. He has not had visits from a doctor of his choosing or medicine or treatment he needs.

**Aleksei Navalny** has complained of debilitating pain in his back and numbness in his legs, and his condition seems daily to be getting worse. To protest not being able to see a doctor of his choice,**Aleksei Navalny** began a hunger strike on 31 March. He was transferred with a fever and cough to a prison hospital on 5 April.

Failure to provide adequate and unfettered access to medical care and subjecting detainees to sleep deprivation may amount to torture or other ill-treatment. As you know, torture is a crime under international law, and all those responsible could be prosecuted in any country they may visit in the future that have instituted such procedures.

**As president of the Russian Federation, we therefore urge you to use your authority to ensure:**

* **Aleksei Navalny is immediately released;**
* **Until his release, he is examined by a qualified independent medical specialist of his choosing, and given the medical treatment prescribed by his specialist, including treatment in a civil medical institution if deemed necessary;**
* **An immediate and effective investigation into Aleksei Navalny’s prison conditions including the alleged practice of sleep deprivation caused by hourly night “checks” and the failure to provide adequate medical treatment, and a commitment to bring those responsible to account.**

I look forward to your immediate and constructive response to these reasonable requests.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Ball