WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned Elena Anatolievna Lenskaya, Andrei Andreevich Zadachin, and Danila Yurievich Mikheev for their involvement in serious human rights abuse against human rights defender, prominent opposition leader, author, and historian Vladimir Kara-Murza (Kara-Murza). These individuals are being designated pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13818, which builds upon and implements the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act and targets perpetrators of serious human rights abuse and corruption around the world.

Kara-Murza has been a major advocate for the adoption of Magnitsky-style sanctions authorities by the United States, Canada, European Union, and United Kingdom to target human rights abusers and corrupt actors in Russia. U.S. Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) called Kara-Murza “one of the most passionate and effective advocates for passage of the Magnitsky Act.” Sergei Magnitsky, the namesake of Magnitsky sanctions, was an attorney and auditor who uncovered a large-scale tax fraud scheme by Russian officials, and was then arrested and detained by Russian authorities, subjected to physical abuse and psychological pressure, and died in a pretrial detention center in Moscow.

Kara-Murza was arrested in Moscow in April 2022 for speaking out against Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. Since then, the Kremlin has had additional politically motivated charges brought against Kara-Murza, and he currently faces the prospect of more than 35 years in prison. Governments and human rights organizations around the world have called for Kara-Murza’s release. In January 2022, the Department of State launched the “Without Just Cause” campaign, which calls for the release of Kara-Murza and other political prisoners globally. In May 2022, Amnesty International determined Kara-Murza to be a prisoner of conscience. In November 2022, Canada designated all three individuals sanctioned today for systematic human rights violations in Russia against opposition leaders, including Vladimir Kara-Murza.
“The U.S. Treasury joins our many national and international partners in calling for Vladimir Kara-Murza’s immediate and unconditional release,” said Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian E. Nelson. “His arbitrary detention is another instance of the Kremlin manipulating Russia’s legal system to silence dissent. Kara-Murza, Alexei Navalny, and so many others in Russia who are unjustly imprisoned are not forgotten, and we will continue to promote accountability for perpetrators of these abuses on the international stage.”

**ARBITRARY DETENTION OF VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA**

On April 11, 2022, Kara-Murza was arrested in the courtyard of his home in Moscow. The next day, the Russian government brought a criminal case against him, alleging he knowingly spread false information on the Russian Armed Forces bombing of residential areas and civilian infrastructure, including maternity facilities, hospitals, and schools. Reporting from independent press, civil society organizations, and the United Nations confirms the Russian military’s involvement in such actions.

The charges specifically referred to a speech given by Kara-Murza on March 15, 2022, before the Arizona House of Representatives, where he spoke out against the Putin regime and war crimes being committed by members of Russia’s military in its illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine. During his trial, Kara-Murza stated that “it is absolutely unlawful and senseless to try to present a legal expression of one’s position as a crime.”

Kara-Murza was subjected to arbitrary detention for speaking the truth about the Putin regime and its actions, which a Russian Federation court found to constitute probable cause that he committed a crime against public safety, falsely claiming Kara-Murza was spreading disinformation and determining he should remain in pre-trial detention pending his trial. Since that time, the Russian government has ramped up its pressure on Kara-Murza by bringing two additional criminal charges against him, for involvement in an “undesirable” foreign organization and for high treason.

**Elena Anatolievna Lenskaya (Lenskaya)** is a judge of the Basmannyy District Court in Moscow who oversaw Kara-Murza’s pre-trial detention hearing. Lenskaya ordered that Kara-Murza be held in pre-trial detention on charges based on his exercising the right to freedom of expression. Lenskaya is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being a foreign person who is responsible for or complicit in, or has directly or indirectly engaged in, serious human
Andrei Andreevich Zadachin (Zadachin) is a Special Investigator assigned to the Chief Investigative Directorate of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation. Zadachin ordered that a criminal case be initiated against Kara-Murza based on his speech before the Arizona House of Representatives. Zadachin requested that detention be ordered as a pre-trial restraint for Kara-Murza and defended this request in court. Zadachin is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being a foreign person who is responsible for or complicit in, or has directly or indirectly engaged in, serious human rights abuse.

Danila Yurievich Mikheev (Mikheev) is a Russian Federation national who served as an expert witness for the Russian government on the case against Kara-Murza, reviewing video of Kara-Murza’s speech and providing a report that served as part of the basis on which Lenskaya ordered Kara-Murza be held. Mikheev is being designated pursuant to E.O. 13818 for being a foreign person who has materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, serious human rights abuse that is conducted by a foreign person.

RELATED ACTIONS

Today’s designations are complemented by the Department of State’s announcement of visa restrictions against Lenskaya and Zadachin under Section 7031(c) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act for their involvement in a gross violation of human rights. Pursuant to Section 7031(c), Lenskaya, Zadachin, and their immediate family members are ineligible for entry into the United States.

Additionally, the Department of State has concurrently designated Oleg Mikhailovich Sviridenko, Diana Igorevna Mishchenko, and Ilya Pavlovich Kozlov under E.O. 14024 for being or having been leaders, officials, senior executive officers, or members of the board of directors of the Government of the Russian Federation. Sviridenko is Russia’s current Deputy Minister of Justice who oversees the prosecution of criminal cases, which includes the criminal case to which Kara-Murza is subject. Mishchenko is the judge who issued the initial ruling approving Kara-Murza’s arrest and sentenced him to 15 days in jail. Kozlov is the judge who denied Kara-Murza’s appeal of Mishchenko’s administrative arrest ruling.

SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS
As a result of today’s action, all property and interests in property of the designated persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked. Unless authorized by a general or specific license issued by OFAC, or exempt, OFAC’s regulations generally prohibit all transactions by U.S. persons or within (or transiting) the United States that involve any property or interests in property of designated or otherwise blocked persons. The prohibitions include the making of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services by, to, or for the benefit of any designated person, or the receipt of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services from any such person.

The power and integrity of OFAC sanctions derive not only from OFAC’s ability to designate and add persons to the SDN List, but also from its willingness to remove persons from the SDN List consistent with the law. The ultimate goal of sanctions is not to punish, but to bring about a positive change in behavior. For information concerning the process for seeking removal from an OFAC list, including the SDN List, please refer to OFAC’s Frequently Asked Question 897 here. For detailed information on the process to submit a request for removal from an OFAC sanctions list, please click here.

GLOBAL MAGNITSKY

Building upon the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, E.O. 13818 was issued on December 20, 2017, in recognition that the prevalence of human rights abuse and corruption that have their source, in whole or in substantial part, outside the United States, had reached such scope and gravity as to threaten the stability of international political and economic systems. Human rights abuse and corruption undermine the values that form an essential foundation of stable, secure, and functioning societies; have devastating impacts on individuals; weaken democratic institutions; degrade the rule of law; perpetuate violent conflicts; facilitate the activities of dangerous persons; and undermine economic markets. The United States seeks to impose tangible and significant consequences on those who commit serious human rights abuse or engage in corruption, as well as to protect the financial system of the United States from abuse by these same persons.

Click here for more information on the individuals designated today.