



## **Open call to the German Council Presidency and High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell**

We, **Members of the European Parliament**, are appalled by and **strongly condemn the murderous attack on Alexey Navalny's life, Russia's most renowned opposition figure**. We acknowledge the statement by the Berlin Charité hospital according to which, "clinical evidence suggests an intoxication through a substance belonging to the group of cholinesterase inhibitors", followed by the German government's confirmation that experts found unequivocal proof of a chemical nerve agent of the Novichok group that has poisoned Alexey Navalny.

We concur with calls by various European governments' on Russian authorities for a full and transparent investigation into the case to hold the perpetrators accountable.

However, we remain extremely sceptical that Russian authorities are fit and willing to investigate the real background of this crime. We all look back at a long history of Putin opponents and independent journalists attacked and/or murdered and Russian authorities failing to bring to justice the real perpetrators: Anna Politkovskaya, Alexander Litvinenko, Sergei Skripal, Boris Nemtsov, Pyotr Verzilov and Vladimir Kara-Murza - these are only the most prominent cases in this gruesome track record.

Thus, we call upon the EU High Representative Josep Borrell and the German Council Presidency **to work towards an international investigation into the poisoning of Alexey Navalny within structures of the United Nations and Council of Europe with possible support of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons**. Russia, as a leading member of the United Nations and the Council of Europe, is bound by their obligations to protect fundamental human rights and investigate crimes. We also reaffirm the necessity by the **EU to swiftly establish the EU Human Rights Violations Sanction Mechanism, so we can hold accountable the people who are behind those attacks against opposition figures and journalists**.

We cannot stand by and watch while opposition in Russia is systematically subjected to poison attacks.

Brussels, 4 September 2020

100 + MEPs from various political groups