

Vladimir Kara-Murza

Russian politician, author, historian, and former political prisoner.

A close colleague of the slain opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, he has served as deputy leader of the People's Freedom Party and was a candidate for the Russian Parliament. Leading diplomatic efforts on behalf of the opposition, Kara-Murza played a key role in the adoption of Magnitsky sanctions against top Russian officials by the United States, United Kingdom, European Union, Canada, and Australia. For this work he was twice poisoned and left in a coma; a joint media investigation by *Bellingcat*, *The Insider*, and *Der Spiegel* has identified FSB officers behind the attacks. In April 2022 Kara-Murza was arrested in Moscow for publicly denouncing the invasion of Ukraine and the war crimes committed by Russian forces. Following a closed-door trial at the Moscow City Court, he was sentenced to 25 years for "high treason" and kept in solitary confinement at a maximum-security prison in Siberia. He was released in August 2024 as part of the largest East-West prisoner exchange since the Cold War negotiated by the U.S. and German governments.

Kara-Murza is a contributing writer at the *Washington Post*, winning the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for his columns written from prison, and has previously worked for Echo of Moscow, BBC, RTVi, *Kommersant*, *World Affairs*, and other media organisations. He has directed three documentary films and is the author or contributor to several books on Russian history and politics. Kara-Murza currently serves as vice-president at the Free Russia Foundation, as senior advisor at Human Rights First, and as senior fellow at the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

He was the founding chairman of the Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom and has led successful international efforts to commemorate Nemtsov, including with street designations in Washington D.C. and London. Kara-Murza is a recipient of several awards, including the Council of Europe's Václav Havel Human Rights Prize, and is an honorary fellow at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He holds an M.A. (Cantab.) in History from Cambridge. He is married, with three children.