

## PRESS RELEASE

**Press release initially issued on February 3, 2021– Update on March 10, 2023**

Dear Sir or Madam,

In light of the many questions we have received and that our employees have received as well, and considering the strong emotion surrounding the situation of Alexei Navalny in Russia, our Group reiterates its total commitment and respect for individual freedoms, the rule of law and freedom of expression.

While it condemns any infringement of these principles to which Mr Alexei Navalny may have fallen victim, it cannot remain silent in the face of public questioning that is unjustified in the strict light of the facts and the law in this case and owes it to its clients, partners and collaborators to set the record straight.

Thus, as a reminder, this case dates back to 2012 for a local commercial case of suspected fraud.

In 2012, the local Russian authorities summoned Yves Rocher Vostok for questioning as part of a judicial investigation that was underway into the Glavpodpiska company, owned by brothers Oleg and Alexei Navalny. Yves Rocher Vostok's management indeed had to answer questions from investigators, and during the questioning they discovered several important and consistent clues pointing to the existence of a possible fraud. In 2008, Yves Rocher Vostok was using the services of the Yaroslav Post Office, which seemed no longer to be able to handle its volumes of packages. Oleg Navalny, one of the senior officials of the Russian Post Office at the time, recommended that Yves Rocher Vostok should use the services of Glavpodpiska, a Russian company. The question was thus whether this proposition was justified and what were the possible implications of Oleg Navalny in Glavpodpiska, whose status as a partner Yves Rocher Vostok did not know at the time. Our subsidiary simply answered the questions of the local authorities. It applied the usual procedures both internally and under the applicable Russian law to have access to the documents and elements of the judiciary file and to shed a light on what had happened.

Yves Rocher Vostok never filed a complaint against the Navalny brothers, nor did it make any legal claim against them. As of 2013, Yves Rocher Vostok has no longer taken part in the proceedings.

A first judgment condemning the Navalny brothers was handed down on December 30, 2014, which was subsequently upheld by the Moscow Court of Appeal in 2015 and by the Russian Supreme Court in 2018. The suspicions of fraud by the Navalny brothers against two private companies (including Yves Rocher Vostok) were upheld by three judgements. As a result of these judgements, Alexei Navalny was sentenced to a 3.5-year suspended prison term with a 5-year probationary period ending on June 30, 2009. The Russian General Prosecutor extended this probationary period in 2017 to December 29, 2020 for acts that do not relate to the case in which Yves Rocher Vostok was involved. It was in the context of this extension of probation, again totally unrelated to the case in which Yves Rocher Vostok was questioned, that Alexei Navalny was imprisoned. This has absolutely no connection with the so-called "Yves Rocher case".

Meanwhile, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in 2017 that the Navalny brothers had been deprived of their right to a fair trial, and denounced "arbitrary and manifestly unreasonable" court decisions. In this respect and in such a case, the European Court was only in charge of judging the conformity of the judicial procedure with the European Convention on Human Rights to which Russia is a signatory. Indeed, the European Court does not examine the facts but only the procedure applied. The ECHR ruled that the procedure was duly conducted under Russian law over which Yves Rocher Vostok had no control as a company.

Finally, we would like to answer to a quotation that is often mentioned in this case, and which is source of confusion. The sentence "we have not suffered any damage" is often taken out of context; this statement referred solely to the prices for services invoiced by the company Glavpodpiska to Yves Rocher Vostok, which were in line with market prices. This does not obliterate the questions about the conditions under which the contract with Glavpodpiska was concluded.

Thus, in Russia, all legal proceedings involving Yves Rocher Vostok are closed.

In France, a complaint for "slandorous denunciation" was filed by Alexei Navalny's lawyers and neither the prosecutor's office nor the examining magistrate hearing the complaint have retained any charge or responsibility against the Group. The procedure was thus closed and only Alexei Navalny requested its reopening by referring to the Rennes Court of Appeal against the investigating judge's refusal to authorize additional investigative acts. After examining the case, the Rennes Court of Appeal confirmed in June 2021 the refusal of the investigating judge to authorize these additional investigative acts requested by Alexei Navalny and on

October 11, 2021, our company was dismissed from the case as none of Alexei Navalny's allegations against us were upheld. As Alexei Navalny has appealed against the dismissal order, the procedure is currently underway before the Court of Appeal in Rennes.

We would like to remind that the Rocher Group is apolitical. In this sense, we do not wish to be used for political purposes nor do we wish to take part in the current political debates taking place in Russia. This is clearly against our values and our mission.

Following Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, the Groupe Rocher decided to cease all investments in the country, while maintaining a presence to support its employees. The Group also has actively participated in the solidarity effort required at such a time through humanitarian collections, financial support, and psychological support.

In addition to working for the common good, our primary objective is, and will always be, the well-being of our customers while ensuring the safety of our employees, as well as the preservation of the private interests of the Rocher Group.

**For more information, please contact**

Marion Moulin, Corporate Communications Director, Groupe Rocher  
[marion.moulin@yrnet.com](mailto:marion.moulin@yrnet.com)