

**OLEG & ALEXEÏ NAVALNY –  
YVES ROCHER VOSTOK :  
THE APPEAL CONFIRMS THE  
DISMISSAL ORDER IN FAVOUR OF  
THE COMPANY LABORATOIRES DE  
BIOLOGIE VEGETALE YVES ROCHER**

PRESS RELEASE

MAY 22, 2023

UPDATED ON FEBRUARY 5, 2025

# **OLEG & ALEXEÏ NAVALNY – YVES ROCHER VOSTOK : THE APPEAL CONFIRMS THE DISMISSAL ORDER IN FAVOUR OF THE COMPANY LABORATOIRES DE BIOLOGIE VÉGÉTALE YVES ROCHER**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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On February 4, 2025, the Court of Cassation rejected the appeal filed by Ms Ioulia Borissovna Navalnaïa and Oleg Navalny, following the judgment of the Rennes Court of Appeal which had confirmed the innocence of the company Laboratoires de Biologie Végétale Yves Rocher on May 19, 2023.

This rejection definitively puts an end to the criminal proceedings initiated in France in July 2016 for slanderous denunciation by Alexei and Oleg Navalny, regarding events that occurred in Russia in December 2012.

While Groupe Rocher acknowledges and is satisfied with this rejection, it wishes to reiterate its unwavering commitment to respect for individual freedoms, the rule of law and freedom of expression, and condemns any violation of these principles of which Alexei Navalny may have been a victim.

### **PRECISIONS ON THE PROCEDURE**

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 Yaroslavl 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. The issue was thus to understand whether this recourse was justified, and what were the possible implications for Oleg Navalny, whose partnership status Yves Rocher Vostok was unaware of at the time. Our subsidiary simply answered local authorities' questions. It applied the usual procedures both internally and under the applicable Russian law in order to gain 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 not taken part in the proceedings under Russian law.

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, 2019. The Russian General Prosecutor extended this probationary period in 2017 to December 29, 2020 for acts that do not relate to the Yves Rocher Vostok case. 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 have been closed to date.

In France, a complaint for "slandering denunciation" was filed in 2016 by Oleg and Alexei Navalny's lawyers and neither the prosecutor's office nor the examining magistrate overseeing the complaint have retained any charge or responsibility against the Group. The procedure has thus been closed and only Oleg and 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 Oleg and Alexei Navalny and on October 11, 2021, our company was dismissed from the case as none of Oleg and Alexei Navalny's allegations against us were upheld.

This dismissal was confirmed by the Rennes Court of Appeal on May 19, 2023, then by the Court of Cassation on February 4, 2025, which definitively closed the proceedings in France.

## **ABOUT GROUPE ROCHER**

Groupe Rocher is a family-owned group founded in 1959 by Mr. Yves Rocher in La Gacilly, in the heart of Brittany. Following the firm belief, based on the founder's personal experience, that nature has a positive effect on people's well-being and thereby on their desire to act for the planet, Groupe Rocher was the first international group to adopt Mission-Driven Company status, in 2019. Its mission is to "reconnect people to nature."

In 2024\*, the Group generated close to €2.2 billion in revenue, a 2.4% increase year on year.

*\*Based on figures available at the time of writing, which may differ from final annual results following official closing of financial statements.*

Groupe Rocher has some 50 million customers, employs 13,500 people and works with 16,000 suppliers. It is active in 118 countries and sells through 2,500 stores as well as online, through direct selling and through mail ordering. Its production and logistics bases in Brittany employ more than 2,000 people directly. The Group pioneered Botanical Beauty®, and farms 60 hectares of fields in La Gacilly following organic and agroecology principles. It makes 85% of its products at its own production plants in Brittany. The Yves Rocher brand ranks number-one by volume (with a 6.3% market share) and number-one by value (with an 8.9% market share) in the French health and beauty market.

## **PRESS CONTACTS**

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