

RSF Condemn Court's Order Against Journalist

International rights watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has condemned a Kazakh court's decision to financially punish an opposition journalist in a controversial libel case.

In a statement, the organization called the court's July 20 ruling a move "to strangle the journalist financially."

Lukpan Akhmedyarov was found guilty of insulting a local official in West Kazakhstan Oblast and ordered to pay the official 5 million tenge (\$33,000).

In April, Akhmedyarov, a correspondent for the "Uralskaya nedelya" weekly in the western city of Oral, survived a vicious attack in which he was stabbed and shot with a pneumatic pistol.

Akhmedyarov says both the lawsuit and the attack against him are politically motivated.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/kazakhstan-journalist-reporters-without-borders/24661135.html>