

# Russian Journalist Jailed For Insulting Judge, Threatening Himself

**Acourt in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don has sentenced a local journalist to 18 months in jail for insulting a local judge in his blog.**

Sergei Reznik [was found guilty](#) on November 26 of "publicly insulting" the chairwoman of the Rostov Oblast Arbitration Court on his LiveJournal blog. The court also found Reznik guilty of paying a 2,000-ruble (\$45) bribe to a mechanic to clear his car in a technical inspection.

Furthermore, the court declared Reznik's claims that he received threatening phone calls a false complaint, and agreed with prosecutors that he had arranged the calls himself.

Reznik initially filed two police complaints of receiving threats of physical violence over the phone. But the local branch of the Investigative Committee instead began proceedings against him, accusing him of "wishing to draw public and media attention to his personality" and "seeking to raise his professional rating."

The investigators said he had asked two acquaintances to make the threatening calls, though the two people who testified to doing so were actually people Reznik had been in conflict with, he told the [Glasnost Defense Fund](#).

Reznik, who is a correspondent with the "Yuzhny federalny" newspaper known for his critical reporting on city officials, pleaded not guilty and said the case against him was connected with his journalistic activities.

The court ordered Reznik taken into custody in the courtroom. There are still two other charges pending against him.

## Threats Of Violence Realized

On the evening of October 22, Reznik survived an attack by two men who beat him with a baseball bat and shot him with a [trauma pistol](#) before disappearing.

"I turned around and saw a lean man catching up with us and raising a baseball bat over Sergei's head," Natalya Reznik told [Glasnost](#). "My husband dodged and took the first blow on the side of his neck. After he fell down, the assailant started kicking away at him, not giving him a chance to rise. I cried out for help, and then I heard the sound of a gunshot."

The police began criminal proceedings, though they wouldn't comment on the likely motives. Reznik connected the assault with his professional work.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Office Representative on Freedom of the Media Dunja Mijatovic [expressed deep concern](#) on October 24. "Attacks like these are simply unacceptable. I trust that the authorities will conduct a thorough and swift investigation of this case and bring those responsible to justice," Mijatovic said.

The International Federation of Journalists and the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) also [condemned the attack](#). "The beating of journalists has sadly been a practice in many Russian regions for many years," EFJ Vice President Nadezda Azhgikhina said. "It is one of the worst forms of censorship, and it often ends with impunity."

-- RFE/RL's Russian Service

<http://www.rferl.org/content/russia-journalist-jailed-insults/25181128.html>