

European Court Orders Russia to Pay Opposition Politician \$40,000

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Boris Nemtsov

The European Court of Human Rights has ordered the Russian government to pay opposition politician Boris Nemtsov €28,500 (about \$40,000) for detaining him at a protest rally in 2010.

In Thursday's ruling in favor of Nemtsov, who is co-chairman of the liberal opposition party RPR-Parnas, the Strasbourg court ordered the Russian government to hand over €26,000 to the politician as compensation for moral damages and another €2,500 for legal fees, ITAR-Tass reported.

The court found that Russian authorities had violated Nemtsov's right to assembly by detaining him at the demonstration on Moscow's Triumfalnaya Ploshchad in December 2010. He was subsequently arrested for 15 days for disobeying police officers.

"It was clear from the very beginning what the court's decision would be, because I was arrested for participating not only in a peaceful rally, but in a sanctioned one," Nemtsov told ITAR-Tass.

Another complaint filed by Nemtsov is still pending with the international court. The claim concerns an earlier Russian court ruling obliging Nemtsov to pay former Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov 500,000 rubles (\$14,000) in a libel case over a report published on Luzhkov's term as mayor in 2009.

Thursday's decision against Russia comes on the same day that the European Court of Human Rights issued another ruling against Moscow for shareholders of the now-defunct oil producer Yukos, ordering the government to cough up €1.9 billion in compensation for shareholders for expropriating the company's assets years ago.

Russia is the source of more applications to the international court than any other country. Last year, Russia took the lead in pending cases, with 129 complaints filed over rights violations, according to German news agency Deutsche Welle.

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