

Judges Disobey Putin in 'Repeat Protest' Conviction

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Konstantin Kotov was arrested and charged amid a wave of criminal prosecutions that were opened over last summer's Moscow election protests. **Maksim Stulov / Vedomosti / TASS**

Russia's Supreme Court will not review Moscow protester Konstantin Kotov's guilty verdict, his lawyer [said](#) Friday days after President Vladimir Putin promised to investigate whether his conviction was lawful.

Kotov, a 34-year-old programmer, was [sentenced](#) to four years in prison in September for "repeated" participation in unauthorized rallies. In the past week, Putin has ordered federal prosecutors to determine if Kotov's verdict was lawful and Russia's Constitutional Court ordered its review.

Related article: [Russia Orders Review of Moscow Activist's 'Repeat Protest' Conviction](#)

The Supreme Court, according to Kotov's lawyer Maria Eismont, will not review Kotov's conviction because the Constitutional Court's order did not declare the criminal article under

which he was prosecuted to be unconstitutional.

“We were prepared for this eventuality,” Eismont wrote on Facebook, adding that Kotov’s defense has filed a new appeal.

Amnesty International [declared](#) Kotov a prisoner of conscience Tuesday and called for his immediate release.

The London-based rights group also criticized Russia’s Constitutional Court for failing to strike down the provision punishing repeat violations of protest rules when it issued the review order Monday.

“Until it is repealed, the authorities will be able to use the provision to prosecute and imprison peaceful protesters for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly,” Amnesty International said.

Kotov was arrested and charged amid a wave of criminal prosecutions that were opened over last summer’s Moscow election protests. The rallies, which began after opposition candidates were barred from the ballot in the Sept. 8 Moscow City Duma election, became the largest wave of protests seen in Russia since 2011–2013.

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