

Russia's Rights Chief Issues Lukewarm Rebuke After Kadyrov's Son Filmed Beating Detainee

September 26, 2023



Ramzan Kadyrov with his son Adam. [Dustum Kadyrov / Instagram](#)

Russia's Human Rights Commissioner Tatiana Moskalkova has [expressed](#) restrained disapproval of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov after he shared a video on social media of his son beating a Russian teenager accused of burning the Quran.

Kadyrov on Monday evening [posted](#) the graphic video of his son Adam, 15, kicking and punching Nikita Zhuravel, 19, who was [detained](#) in May on suspicion of publicly burning a Quran in the southern region of Volgograd.

The criminal case against Zhuravel was later handed to investigators in the republic of Chechnya, where activists said he risked being tortured.

"He [Adam Kadyrov] beat him [Zhuravel] and did the right thing," Kadyrov said on the messaging app Telegram.

"I'm proud of Adam's ... adult ideals of honor and dignity in defense of his religion," the Chechen strongman added.

Related article: [Chechen Officials Praise Kadyrov's Son for Beating Teenager Accused of Burning Koran](#)

Following the video's publication, Moskalkova said the destruction of religious texts "cannot go unpunished," but stressed that "No matter what terrible crime a person commits, they must answer before the court according to the law."

"And they must certainly be held in pre-trial detention during the investigation according to the rules established by law," she added without specifically mentioning either Zhuravel or the Kadyrovs.

Presidential human rights council chairman Valery Fadeyev [issued](#) a similarly ambiguous statement, criticizing the Quran-burning while saying rules of detention "must be strictly observed."

But neither of the two officials went so far as to publically call for an investigation into the beating, as some public figures and members of the Council for Human Rights have already done.

Council member Eva Merkacheva [said](#) she planned to report the video to law enforcement authorities and called for Zhuravel's transfer from Chechnya.

"This is a challenge to Russia's entire legal system. They've shown in a particular region that they can commit crimes and nothing will happen to them," Merkacheva said.

"I fear the next news may be that we'll find Nikita Zhuravel dead in his cell," she continued.

Media personality Ksenia Sobchak [said](#) Kadyrov told her by phone that his son would be "punished to the fullest extent of the law if the court decides that Adam is guilty."

Russian law enforcement authorities have not yet publicly responded to the video posted by Kadyrov.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Tuesday [told](#) journalists that he would not answer questions about the video, explaining his decision by only saying "I don't want to."

Related article: [Russian Journalist Vows to Continue Visiting Chechnya After Brutal Attack](#)

Russia's state human rights commissioner Moskalkova said last month she had received a complaint from Zhuravel accusing Adam Kadyrov of beating him in detention.

At the time, senior Chechen officials and lawmakers [lavished praise](#) on Kadyrov's son following initial reports about the beating of Zhuravel, who they described as "subhuman."

On Monday, Zhuravel's lawyer [said](#) he no longer represents him in the wake of Kadyrov's

post, telling journalists that he "had not seen" the video of his client being beaten "nor did he want to watch it."

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/09/26/russias-rights-chief-issues-lukewarm-rebuke-after-kadyshev-son-filmed-beating-detainee-a82562>