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Chechnya's Kadyrov Calls for 'Blood Vengeance' Against Relatives of Fugitives

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Ramzan Kadyrov. **Yelena Afonina / TASS**

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov has called for the prosecution of wanted fugitives' family members, according to the opposition group 1Adat, remarks he made during a meeting with officials on New Year's Eve.

Kadyrov said he had instructed Chechnya's law enforcement agencies to maintain "extreme vigilance" during the holidays, which in Russia take place on Jan. 1-8.

"I emphasized that any attempt to commit violence toward a person's life will impact the relatives of the perpetrator," he wrote on the messaging app Telegram.

"Close relatives must know what a member of their family is doing and bear responsibility for them as Chechen adats [customary laws] have taught us for centuries," Kadyrov added.

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Chechen opposition group 1Adat translated Kadyrov's Chechen-language comments made during the New Year's Eve meeting with officials, saying he had called for "blood vengeance" against the relatives of those who commit violence against law enforcement officials in the republic of Chechnya or tourists.

"A person commits murder and walks away free without punishment, while their relatives begin renouncing them," Kadyrov was quoted as saying.

"No renouncements will work until we kill someone from their family and claim the right of blood vengeance."

The Moscow Times could not independently verify 1Adat's translation.

The opposition group added that Kadyrov's other comments included calls for the murder of dissident critics living in other countries.

"We'll get rid of a person the way we know how [unless they are extradited to Russia]," Kadyrov was quoted as saying.

Kadyrov has previously called for violence against his critics, including "shooting" protesters "in the head" as well as "breaking the fingers and tearing out the tongues" of those who insult him.

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