

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/kazakhstan-link-to-victim-s-work-ignored-in-08-06-2011,40419.html>

Europe & ex-USSR - Kyrgyzstan

Partial justice?

Link to victim's work ignored in trial of Kyrgyz journalist's accused murderers

8 June 2011

The trial of three people accused of killing [Kyrgyz journalist Gennady Pavlyuk](#) in the Kazakh capital of Almaty in December 2009 by throwing him from the 6th floor of a building opened two days ago in Almaty. At the time of his death, Pavlyuk had been given the job of creating a news website and a weekly newspaper for the Kyrgyz opposition party Ata-Meken.

"The decision to hold an open trial at the request of the victim's family is a significant advance," Reporters Without Borders said. "We hope this will help to end all the confusion and contradictions that mark the case. But justice will not be done without further investigation into the possibility that the murder was linked to the victim's professional and political activities. It is outrageous that the investigators ruled this out."

The three defendants – former Kyrgyz national security agent Aldayar Ismankulov, and two Kazakh citizens, Chalkar Orazalin and Almaz Igilikov – pleaded not guilty to charges of attempted homicide and extorting money. According to investigation, which was concluded on 23 March, they kidnapped Pavlyuk to make him give them the combination to his safe, and threw him out of a sixth-floor window when he refused.

"This version of events is utterly ridiculous, given Pavlyuk's modest life-style and the sensitive nature of the subjects he covered," Reporters Without Borders said. "His links with the opposition party Ata-Meken is another significant factor. How could the investigation ignore the intense repression that characterized the last months of former Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev's government? How could this murder not have been premeditated when Pavlyuk was lured to Almaty with false promises and his killers had specially rented the apartment from which he was thrown?"

"We urge the police and judicial authorities not to stop at the killers but to identify the high-placed masterminds and accomplices as well. Establishing the political connections in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan is fundamental. In particular, the links between the former Kyrgyz special services and organized crime must be thoroughly investigated. The lack of action is all the more incomprehensible as the Kyrgyz authorities have been ready to cooperate since the change of government in Kyrgyzstan in April 2010."

Pavlyuk was seen leaving Almaty's Hotel Kazakhstan on 16 December 2009 with a man identified as Igilikov by a taxi driver. He was found unconscious, with his hands and feet bound, at the foot of a building in the city centre a few hours later. He died from his injuries six days later. The exact reasons for his presence in the Kazakh capital have never been clearly established.

Pavlyuk made a name for himself as the editor of the Kyrgyz version of the Russian newspaper *Argumenty I Fakty*. The founder of the independent newspaper *Bely Parohod*, he also edited the Kyrgyz version of *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. He was very critical of Kurmanbek Bakiyev, who was still president at the time of his death.

Prior to his overthrow in 2010, Bakiyev's regime had become much more oppressive and independent journalists had been the victims of [a wave of physical attacks](#). Pavlyuk may have been another of these victims.

