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Law and Justice (PiS) election chief of staff Joachim Brudziński is to apologise to the Open Dialogue Foundation and its founders Lyudmyla Kozlovskaya and Bartosz Kramek for his 2019 Twitter post in which the then head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MSWiA) directly implied that the Foundation was involved in money laundering. Brudziński is also to pay a total of PLN 30 000 in compensatory damages. The judgment is not yet final.

30 thousand Polish zloty of compensatory damages and an apology which Joachim Brudziński is to post on Twitter where it has to remain visible for two months – such is the verdict of the court which ruled that the Law and Justice (PiS) chief of staff of the 2019 election campaign had violated the personal rights of Lyudmyla Kozlovskaya and her husband Bartosz Kramek as well as those of the Open Dialogue Foundation.

Four years ago, when the parliamentary election campaign was underway, Brudziński (the then head of the **Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration**) tweeted: *"Hi, defenders of the "Euro-Kazakh" crooks famous for "shutting down the government". Do you know you are useful idiots? Do you realise that December's 'miraculous resurrection' of Mr. D. and the Rossmann candles were funded with laundered money? I don't think that Lusia and her tolerant husband are likely to get the Nobel Prize".*

The innuendo that the Open Dialogue Foundation was allegedly involved in money laundering was the aftermath of a report prepared in 2018 by a special investigative commission of the then Moldovan parliament. The parliament was then ruled by groups of oligarchs who accused the Foundation of purported illegal funding of opposition parties in Moldova.

Moldova withdrew the report earlier this year stating that it is a "stain on the conscience of the Moldovan parliamentarism". However, its findings had been covered by UK's Sunday Times. And it was this source and the report itself that was the basis for Law and Justice (PiS) politicians and acolytes of that party to make their accusations against the Open Dialogue Foundation of alleged money laundering.

The court: Brudziński has persevered in his decision not to appear in court

In Brudziński's case, the court has found that personal rights of both Lyudmyla Kozlovskaya and Bartosz Kramek and their Foundation have been evidently violated. Brudziński's tweet has been deemed by the court to be "clearly offensive". The Court considered it reasonable to award compensatory damages in view of the consequences that could be suffered by the founders of the Open Dialogue Foundation, namely loss of trust both in Poland and in an international arena.

Brudziński's attorney, Adrian Salus, tried to convince the court that the meaning of his client's tweet, which some internet users labelled "gibberish", was so vague and incomprehensible that there was no reason to punish him for it. The court did not share this line of reasoning.

"The judgment illustrates Joachim Brudziński's moral qualifications as the chief of staff of the Law and Justice (PiS) party and is a reflection of what the party's cadres represent," the Chairman of the Open Dialogue Foundation, Bartosz Kramek, told Onet. *"We are not in any way surprised by this ruling. This is already the fifth case in which we have won a lawsuit for violation of personal rights against the Law and Justice party or its agencies, such as the public television,"* Bartosz Kramek pointed out. *"The court's ruling proves that words carry weight, that no one can hurl calumnies with impunity,"* he emphasized.

"Coming back to Mr. Brudziński, the fact that he, as the court put it, 'has persevered in his decision not to appear in court', is the best manifestation of his civil courage," Kramek emphasises. *"The most important thing, however, is that after the elections he be held liable in criminal court for abuse of power, such as his involvement in illegal surveillance in PHH hotels,"* Kramek concludes.

The hunt for the Open Dialogue

The Polish state's battle against Kozlovskaya and Kramek has been continuing since 2017, when Kramek published the manifesto on Facebook: "Let the State Come to a Stop: Let's Shut Down the Government!" Relying on the experience of the Ukrainian Maidan as the model, Kramek proposed "how to stop the Law and Justice party's assault on the rule of law in Poland". This text was written during mass protests across the country, when PiS was trying to push through its changes to the judiciary.

This publication set off a number of [attacks against the Open Dialogue Foundation by the Polish government, which included customs and tax audits of the Foundation, attempts to bring in an external receiver](#) and attempts to strip the foundation of its accreditation with EU institutions in Brussels. None of these attempts have been successful, as we wrote in the article "What do the Internal Security Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have on Kozlovskaya? Nothing, but the hunt continues".

In the summer of 2018 Poland entered Lyudmyla Kozlovskaya into the Schengen Information System, resulting in her immediate expulsion from the EU. Both she and her husband had long expected the Polish government to play the deportation card in retaliation for Kramek's public activities.

In December of 2022 the Supreme Administrative Court (NSA) ruled that contrary to the claims by services subordinate to the Law and Justice party, Kozlovskaya posed no threat to the security of the Polish state. Nonetheless, she has not been allowed to enter Poland to this day.

Source: onet.pl

More on this topic: Bartosz Kramek, Poland, Open Dialogue, persecution of activists, fake news, Lyudmyla Kozlovskaya, rule of law in Poland, Law and Justice, attacks on ODF, Joachim Brudziński, court disputes



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