
Mikhail Khodorkovsky arrested in absentia



Having considered a request of the Major Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee a court has ruled in absentia to remand Mikhail Khodorkovsky in custody. Earlier he was charged with crimes under part 3 of article 33, paragraphs "a", "b", "f", "g" and "h" of part 2 of article 105 and part 3 of article 30, part 3 of article 33, paragraphs "a", "b", "f", "g" and "h" of part 2 of article 105, part 2 of article 105 of the RF Penal Code (organization of murder and attempted murder of two or more people).

According to investigators, Khodorkovsky, while being a shareholder and president of Yukos oil company in 1998-1999, ordered his subordinates Nevzlin and Pichugin and others to kill mayor of the town of Nefteyugansk Petukhov and businessman Rybin, whose work contradicted the interests of Yukos. It is absolutely obvious for investigators that the crimes were committed out of mercenary motives. They had decided to kill Petukhov because as the mayor of Nefteyugansk he had had every right to demand from Yukos to return all taxes hidden from the state. The attempted murder of Yevgheny Rybin was linked to the actions he had filed against Yukos to recover damage done by illegal activity of the oil company.

I have to note that setting a restraint following pressing of charges is a standard procedure. It is of no importance where the felon is hiding – in Russia or abroad, be it even Antarctica – it is our duty to take all legal measures to prosecute them. The Investigative Committee acts not only in accordance with Russian laws, but with international ones and is guided by one of the main principles of criminal law – unavailability of punishment. This principle have to be applied to everybody with no exceptions, and all the more so to those who have committed felonies, such as murder or attempted murder.

Leonid Nevzlin, Aleksey Pichugin, Gennady Tsigelkin, Yevgheny Reshetnikov and Vladimir Shapiro have already been convicted of those crimes.

Mikhail Khodorkovsky is wanted.

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