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Russian Federation: Victory for Aleksandr Nikitin, but still a long way to go for justice in Russia

Amnesty International welcomes today's decision by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation to uphold the acquittal of high-profile human rights defender Aleksandr Nikitin by the St Petersburg City Court. Aleksandr Nikitin had faced charges of espionage and revealing state secrets, carrying a sentence of up to 20 years' imprisonment, after *writing two chapters for a Bellona Foundation report on the risks of radioactive pollution from Russia's Northern Fleet.*

"There never was any doubt that Aleksandr Nikitin was innocent of the charges brought against him. What the Russian authorities described as an act of treason, Amnesty International and the Russian human rights movement believed all along that it is a peaceful exercise of freedom of expression. Aleksandr Nikitin should never have had to face trial in the first place", Amnesty International said today.

"While the decision by the Supreme Court has finally brought justice for Aleksandr Nikitin, and is a clear victory for Russia's judicial system, there is still a long way to go until all human rights abuses across the whole of the Russian Federation, including Chechnya, have been addressed and the perpetrators brought to justice."

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