
KYRGYZSTAN: FORMER PRESIDENT REFUSES TO OBEY SUBPOENA IN UNSPECIFIED INVESTIGATION

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Former Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev has refused to obey a subpoena calling for him to report to the Interior Ministry in Bishkek for questioning in an unspecified criminal investigation, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reported.

Interior Ministry officials delivered the subpoena to Atambayev's residential compound in the village of Koi-Tash near Bishkek late on July 8.

It called for him to report to the police on July 9 for questioning "as a witness" in a criminal investigation, but did not disclose details about the case.

Atambayev faces five counts of misconduct in office when he was president from 2011 to 2017, including corruption, abuse of office, and illegal enrichment.

Atambayev has rejected all the charges against him, saying they are politically motivated.

After receiving the subpoena, Atambayev told dozens of supporters near his residence that he would not report to the Interior Ministry because "the authorities first must fix their illegal decisions."

The July 8 subpoena is the first received by Atambayev. Under Kyrgyz law, a person who refuses to obey two subpoenas can be forcibly detained for questioning.

In an interview with RFE/RL on July 9, Atambayev's lawyer, Sergei Slesarev, confirmed that neither he nor Atambayev would report to police for questioning.

Slesarev argued that a June 27 parliamentary vote stripping Atambayev of his immunity from prosecution was illegal.

According to Slesarev, amendments made in May to the law on the immunity of former presidents were unconstitutional.

Kyrgyz lawmakers voted overwhelmingly to lift Atambayev's immunity, clearing the way for his prosecution.

Atambayev has spent most of his time since the June 27 vote at his compound in Koi-Tash. He has publicly stated that he has weapons.

On July 3, Atambayev left his compound to speak at a rally in Bishkek, where about 1,000 of his supporters demonstrated to demand the charges against him be dropped.

<https://www.timesca.com/index.php/news/21364-kyrgyzstan-former-president-refuses-to-obey-subpoena-in-unspecified-investigation>

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