

Prison term for Kazakh leader's son-in-law

by UPI

ALMATY, Kazakhstan - The former son-in-law of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, now in Austria, has been sentenced in absentia to 20 years in a Kazakh prison. Rakhat Aliyev was convicted of a long list of charges, including kidnapping two managers of a bank he controlled. He denies any wrongdoing, saying that the criminal case is politically motivated, and has accused Nazarbayev of being a totalitarian ruler, the Russian news agency Itar-Tass reports. Aliyev, the ex-husband of Nazarbayev's elder daughter, was appointed ambassador to Austria after the kidnapping charges were made last year. He was fired after he criticized the Kazakh president. Austrian officials have refused to extradite Aliyev, who is seeking asylum. He was arrested in June on an international warrant. Nazarbayev has been president since Kazakhstan became independent in 1991 with the breakup of the Soviet Union. He previously served as First Secretary of the Kazakh Communist Party.

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