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WDR Journalist Georg Restle Receives Death Threat After Criticising Right-Wing Party AfD



SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ Unknown

CATEGORY  ▶ Attacks on physical safety and integrity of journalists

PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ

After a critical comment on the German right wing party "Alternative für Deutschland" (AfD), investigative journalist Georg Restle became victim of online harassment culminating in a death threat received by letter. On 11 July 2019, Restle had described the AfD as the "parliamentary arm of a right-wing extremist movement" in a commentary at the news broadcast "Tagesthemen". He was referring to the "Identitäre Bewegung", an organisation recently classified as a "right-wing extremist movement" by the German Office for the Protection of the Constitution. In the statement, he demands the AfD to be classified as right-wing extremist, too. As a reaction to the commentary, Restle faced harsh criticism on social media and from the AfD itself. Party leader Jörg Meuthen called Restle an "enemy of democracy" and freedom of expression during a speech in Cottbus. His employer, the public service broadcaster "Westdeutscher Rundfunk" (WDR) has filed a criminal complaint.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

-  Press release by WDR (in German): "WDR stellt Strafanzeige wegen Morddrohung"
-  News article by Spiegel Online (in German): "WDR stellt Strafanzeige wegen Morddrohung gegen Journalisten"

STATE REPLIES



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-  Statement by the State Chancellery for the State of Nordrhein-Westfalen (in English and German)

