Court fines ex-Spanish football chief Rubiales $11,300 for forced kiss

Date: 2025-02-20

Source: https://punchng.com/court-fines-ex-spanish-football-chief-rubiales-11300-for-forced-kiss/

(COMBO)(FILES) This combination of file pictures created on January 29, 2025 shows Spain's forward #10 Jenni Hermoso during the UEFA Women's Nations League football match between Spain and Switzerland (Zurich on October 31, 2023) and former president of the Spanish football federation Luis Rubiales leaving the Audiencia Nacional court (Madrid on September 15, 2023). (Photo by SEBASTIEN BOZON and Thomas COEX / AFP)  
  
A Spanish court on Thursday convicted former football chief Luis Rubiales of sexual assault over the forced kiss he gave star forward Jenni Hermoso, fining him €10,800 ($11,300).  
  
However, the court acquitted him and three other accused individuals of coercion charges.  
  
Prosecutors had sought a two-and-a-half-year prison sentence for Rubiales — one year for sexual assault and 18 months for coercion — alleging he pressured Hermoso to downplay the incident.  
  
Rubiales was accused of sexual assault for kissing Hermoso in 2023 following Spain’s Women’s World Cup triumph in Australia, as well as coercion for allegedly trying to persuade her to dismiss the significance of the incident.  
  
The global outcry over the kiss forced Rubiales to resign in disgrace, drawing attention to the prevalence of macho culture and sexism in sports.  
  
Hermoso, 34, testified on the opening day of the trial on 3 February, saying she felt “disrespected” after a non-consensual kiss that “should not happen in any social or workplace setting.”  
  
However, Rubiales, 47, told the court on Tuesday that he was “totally sure” Hermoso had consented to the kiss as she stepped up to receive her winner’s medal. He denied pressuring her after the incident, which was broadcast live worldwide.  
  
He admitted he “made a mistake” on the podium, saying he should have “adopted a more formal role,” but insisted no offence had been committed.  
  
Rubiales’ court testimony contrasted sharply with the defiance he  
  
showed when the scandal first broke.  
  
During an emergency federation meeting in August 2023, he dismissed the importance of the kiss, resisted calls for his resignation, and denounced “false feminism.”  
  
Rubiales eventually resigned in September 2023 after FIFA suspended him and Spanish prosecutors launched an investigation into alleged sexual assault. He had been president of the federation since 2018.  
  
Hermoso, the all-time top scorer for Spain’s women’s team, now plays for Mexican club Tigres. She was not immediately called up to the national squad after the World Cup, but new coach Montse Tomé insisted the omission was “to protect” her rather than as “punishment.”  
  
AFP