

BITCOIN DEFAMATION TRIAL COMMENCES IN OSLO

OSLO, WEST BERKS, NORWAY, August 30, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- □ Norwegian digital asset enthusiast and Lightning Torch project creator Magnus Granath (user of Twitter handle “Hodlonaut”) seeks a ‘negative judicial declaration’ from Oslo District Court that his tweets against Dr Wright, the creator of Bitcoin, are not defamatory.

□ Dr Craig Wright has a counterclaim against Granath for defamation relating to tweets published in March 2019.

□ Seven-day trial starts 12 September 2022 to determine whether a campaign of disparagement orchestrated by Granath against Dr Wright existed and, if so, the extent of damage caused to Dr Wright.

□ Dr Wright is bringing counterclaims for damages in defamation against Granath in Norway and separate defamation proceedings in England.

On Monday 12 September the Oslo District Court will hear Magnus Granath’s request for the court to determine that his campaigning tweets in March 2019 (calling Dr Wright a fraud and decrying Dr Wright’s pseudonymous identity as Satoshi Nakamoto), were not defamatory of Dr Wright. Dr Wright’s counter-claims for damages arising from Granath’s publications will also be heard during this seven-day trial.

Following a campaign of online attacks denying his Nakamoto identity and personal integrity via an anonymous, but well-followed, twitter account (“Hodlonaut”), Dr Wright sought to uncover the online activist and the motivation behind his personal abuse.

Wright’s investigations ultimately exposed Norwegian pro-BTC enthusiast, Magnus Granath, as Hodlonaut – who then, through Wright’s lawyers, was given an opportunity to retract his tweets to avoid legal action. Unfortunately Granath ignored these requests and instead rushed to his domestic court in an effort to stave off legal liability for his publications.

The court will hear allegations that starting in March 2019, Granath coordinated a campaign of harassment and disparagement against Dr Wright’s legitimate claim to be the inventor of Bitcoin (BSV), the world’s first functioning and successful electronic cash system.

It is known that Granath (through his Hodlonaut Twitter handle) had some 8,800 followers and encouraged and facilitated them to amplify his message that Dr Wright is variously “a fraud”; represents “the scummiest side of humanity”; is “a very sad and pathetic scammer” and even that Dr Wright is “clearly mentally ill”, while adopting the hashtag #CraigWrightIsAFraud. The subsequent tweets, quote tweets and retweets reached a global audience of thousands of people with a specific interest in the development of Bitcoin. Many of these readers will not have suspected Granath’s motivation – the development of his own commercial interest in BTC – according to Dr Wright.

Dr Wright has always welcomed informed discussion and debate around the development of, and future prospects for, this digital currency (BSV), whether in person or online. However he cannot accept deliberate attempts to deny he is Nakamoto, nor targeted personal abuse, particularly from those who hide behind anonymous (rather than pseudonymous) social media handles to avoid legal responsibility for their actions.

Halvor Manshaus Partner at Schjødt law firm, Dr Wright’s Norwegian lawyers, says: “The plaintiff has made a series of strongly worded allegations and derogatory statements about Dr Wright. This was done in the form of anonymous tweets to the plaintiff’s thousands of followers, which repeatedly called on others to join him in his online disparagement of Dr Wright.

“This is not the type of discussion that enjoys protection under freedom of speech provisions. Rather it breaches the commonly accepted threshold of decency and respectfulness in communication – whether online or in person.

“Anonymous online bullying of this kind risks having a chilling effect on meaningful debate and the civil exchange of views and opinions. Dr Wright has called into question the motives for Granath’s repeated personal attacks on him, which appear rooted in economic incentives rather than fact.”

ENDS

Trial judge: District Court Judge Helen Engebrigtsen.

Legal Advisors: Dr Wright is represented by: Halvor Manshaus and Halvard Helle of Schjødt.

Dr Wright’s Closing Summary and List of Witnesses in the case is available on request.

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