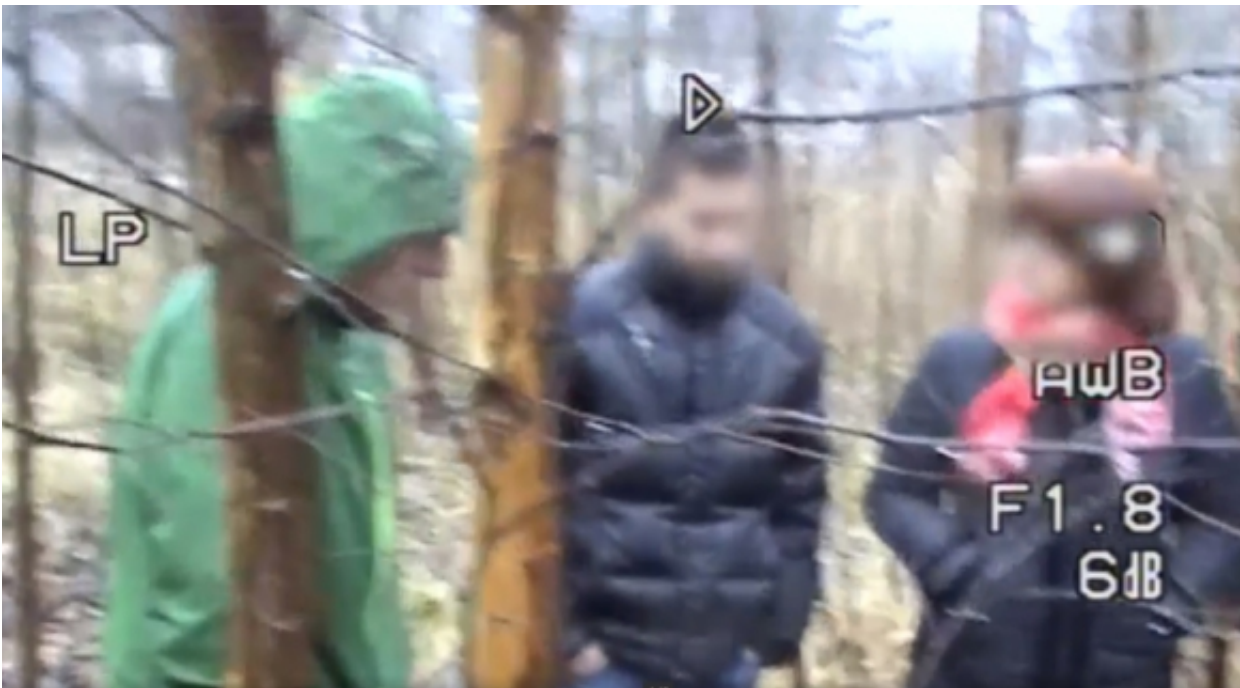


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## **The Investigative Committee of Russia established all circumstances of the murder of the rector of St. Petersburg State University of Service and Economics**



The evidence gathered by the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation was found by the court, based on an earlier jury verdict, sufficient to convict Vasily Solovyev, former vice-rector of the St. Petersburg State University of Service and Economics for academic affairs, who organized the murder of Alexander Viktorov, rector of the same university. Solovyev was found guilty of committing an offense under Part 3 of Article 33, Paragraphs B and H of part 2 of Article 105 of the Criminal Code (organization of murder).

The murder of Alexander Viktorov was committed on September 5, 2012. He and his wife were returning home near Vsevolozhsk in an official car with a driver. As soon as the couple, having let the driver go, entered their yard, the killer, to whom the accomplice had signaled in advance that the car was approaching, shot the 61-year-old rector three times in the back and head, and his wife was wounded in the thigh. The man died at the scene, the woman survived. The killer fled in a car that was waiting for him nearby.

According to investigators, in the summer of 2012 Solovyev met with his friend Vitaly Kovalev in a

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restaurant in St. Petersburg and asked him to find killers to kill Viktorov. Kovalev asked for remuneration of 30,000 euro. The customer, in turn, informed the organizer of the addresses of places of work and residence of the future victim, as well as the names of websites that posted photos of rector Viktorov. Vasily Solovyev also promised to pay for the murder in time and to give his partner the agreed amount in foreign currency and non-residential premises in St. Petersburg. After receiving the deposit, Vitaly Kovalev began preparations for the murder: he purchased a homemade pistol with a silencer, radios, cell phones, and rented cars. He also enlisted his acquaintances Vyacheslav Makarov, who was assigned the role of driver, and Andrei Eliseev, who agreed to directly commit the murder. According to investigators, the three mercenaries settled in a private house rented specifically for them in St. Petersburg. Using different vehicles, they followed the victim and established his routes.

The investigation and the court found that the motive for the murder was the revenge of Solovyev to Viktorov for initiated legal actions to recover from the organizations under Solovyev's control the damage caused to the university in connection with the failure to return the funds for the education of students and the alienation of disputed real estate.

Previously, the court sentenced the executors of the contract killing: Eliseev - for committing crimes under Articles 105, 112, 222 of the Criminal Code of Russia (murder, premeditated infliction of average damage to health, illegal acquisition and keeping of firearms); Kovalev - for committing offenses under Article 33, Part 3, Paragraph H of Part 2 of Article 105, Part 3 of Article 33, Part 1 of Article 30, Part 2, Paragraph H of Article 105, Part 1 of Article 222 of the Criminal Code of Russia (organization of murder for hire, organization of preparation for murder, illegal acquisition and keeping of firearms). M. Makarov was sentenced under Parts 4 and 5, Part 2 of Article 105 (aiding and abetting a murder for hire), and Parts 4 and 5, Part 1 of Article 33, Part 2 of Article 105 of the Criminal Code of Russia (aiding and abetting in preparation for a murder for hire). All of the above-mentioned individuals were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment (Kovalev was sentenced to 17 years in a strict regime colony; Makarov and Eliseev were sentenced to 9 and 13 years respectively, to be served in a strict regime colony).

Since Solovyev managed to escape, he was sentenced on the basis of the guilty verdict of the jury in absentia. Solovyev was sentenced to 18 years of imprisonment in a strict regime penal colony and a sum of 20 million rubles to be paid to the victims. He is on the international wanted list. After Solovyev is located and detained, he will necessarily be sent to a place of detention.

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