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## **The criminal investigation into a Russian citizen accused of mercenarism completed**



The Main Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of Russia completed the investigation of a criminal case against a citizen of the Russian Federation, Anton Korolev, accused in absentia of committing crimes under Part 1 of Article 280 of the Criminal Code (public calls for extremist activities) and Part 3 of Article 359 of the Criminal Code (participation of a mercenary in an armed conflict).

According to the investigation, Korolev, being a supporter of nationalist views, in 2013-2014 actively promoted the ideas of National Socialism, and in 2014, in order to materially enrich himself and promote his views, contacted Ukrainian nationalists, after which he came to Ukraine and voluntarily joined the Ukrainian nationalist battalion "Azov". In Ukraine, Korolev underwent special training at the Azov battalion's training bases, gaining skills in handling weapons and explosives, and knowledge of military strategy and tactics. And from 2015 to 2019 he directly participated in

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combat operations in the southeast of Ukraine as part of the said unit against the forces of the people's militia of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, for which he received regular material remuneration. Korolev actively covered his activities in the battalion via the Internet among Ukrainian nationalists, speaking to Ukrainian journalists.

Currently, Korolev continues to be outside the Russian Federation and is hiding from Russian law enforcement authorities.

Earlier, the investigation had provided all the necessary materials confirming the criminality of Korolev's actions in order to send a request for the extradition of the accused to Russia in accordance with the established procedure. However, the Ukrainian side refused to extradite Korolev.

The criminal case against Korolev was sent to the court for consideration on the merits in the absence of the accused, as allowed by criminal procedural law, if the defendant hides from the investigation abroad.

S. Petrenko, official spokesperson for the Investigative Committee of Russia

*08 December 2021*

*Page address:* <https://en.sledcom.ru/news/item/1636839>