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## **Russian citizen is sentenced in absentia for mercenarism and public calls for extremist activity**



The evidence collected by the Investigative Committee of Russia was recognized as sufficient for sentencing Mr. Anton Korolev, citizen of the Russian Federation, who was found guilty in absentia of committing crimes prescribed in Part 1, Article 280 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (public calls for extremist activities) and Part 3, Article 359 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (participation of a mercenary in an armed conflict).

As the investigation and the court established, in 2013-2014 Mr. Korolyov, being a supporter of nationalistic views, had been actively promoting the ideas of National Socialism. In 2014, for the purpose of material gain and to propagate his views, he came in contact with Ukrainian nationalists, and voluntarily joined the Ukrainian nationalist battalion "Azov". In Ukraine, Mr. Korolev underwent special training at the Azov Battalion training bases, gained skills in handling weapons, explosives, as well as knowledge of military strategy and tactics. Between 2015 and 2019, he was

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directly involved in the hostilities in the south-east of Ukraine as a participant of the specified unit against the forces of the people's militia of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, and he received regular material rewards for his services. Mr.Korolyov actively shared his routine life in the battalion on the Internet, and with other Ukrainian nationalists. He was frequently interviewed by Ukrainian reporters.

Currently, Mr. Korolev continues to reside outside the Russian Federation hiding from Russian law enforcement agencies.

Earlier, investigation provided all the necessary materials confirming the criminality of Mr. Korolyov's actions in order to file a formal extradition request of the accused to Russia. However, the Ukrainian side refused to extradite Mr. Korolyov.

Mr. Korolyov was sentenced in absentia to 9 years in prison to be served in a general regime penal colony. He is also banned from all activities related to website development and administration.

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