

FSB Orders Finn Linked to Winter Protests to Leave Russia

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Finnish National Antti Rautiainen was given 15 days to leave to country.

The Federal Security Service will expel a Finnish national who belongs to an anarchist organization that participated in the mass opposition protests this winter, RBC Daily reported Wednesday.

Antti Rautiainen, 33, has lived in Russia almost 13 years, speaks five languages, and is writing a dissertation on neural networks. But more importantly for the FSB, he is also part of a Russian anarchist movement called Autonomous Action and is an editor of its journal, Avtonom. The organization actively participated in opposition protests in Moscow, St. Petersburg and about 10 other cities.

Last week, Rautiainen received a letter from the Federal Migration Service saying he had 15 days to depart the country because he "poses a threat to the security of Russia."

"It could be nice to pose a security threat, but I suspect that actually I am no such thing," Rautiainen told Finnish newspaper Helsingin Sanomat. "It was not necessarily a very well-

considered decision ... [Our organization] is small but has apparently surpassed the annoyance threshold."

He said this was not the first time he has been the subject of interest by the FSB, even though his organization is not deemed extremist or illegal by the authorities. He said he has been questioned by members of the security service who intimated that they suspected him of espionage.

But he said this was the first time he received any form of administrative penalty related to his actions.

"If they consider me a spy, they don't respect the special services of Finland," Rautiainen said, RBC Daily reported. "They should see the communal apartment where I rent a room and Autonomous Action's meager budget."

Rautiainen said he intends to file a formal complaint with the migration services with the help of lawyers from an organization that aids foreign nationals living in Russia.

People who have found themselves on the wrong side of the FSB have found it virtually possible to fight expulsion, including Moldovan native and New Times journalist Natalya Morar, who found herself on an FSB blacklist for what she says was retaliation for her criticism of Russian authorities. She was able to return to Russia last week after a four-year ban, with no explanation given about why the ban was lifted.

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