

Female Russian Sex Slave Traders Avoid Jail

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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MOSCOW, July 16 (RIA Novosti) — Two women in the Far East got away with suspended jail sentences for their roles in selling 51 girls into sexual slavery in countries as far away as Greece and South Korea, Russian officials said Tuesday.

The two unnamed women from the Khabarovsk region, aged 60 and 36, each got seven-year suspended sentences for recruiting and selling their victims, five of whom were under 18, into sex work between 2005 and 2010, the Investigative Committee said in a statement.

Working with a foreign-based criminal gang led by Israelis, the accused "recruited victims from socially deprived families, former residents of orphanages as well as those in difficult situations," according to the investigators' report.

The convicted women were paid about \$1,000 for each of their victims, who were promised jobs as waitresses and dancers at top restaurants with good salaries. As soon as they traveled

outside Russia, they were threatened with physical violence and their documents were taken away. They were forced to dance naked at nightclubs and provide sexual services.

At least 23 of those victims were sent to the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, 10 to China, 13 to Cyprus and Greece, four to South Korea and one to Israel, the statement said.

The trafficking network was broken up after a large-scale crackdown on its activities in Greece, resulting in 10 nightclubs being closed, 180 people facing legal action and 19 criminals being arrested, investigators said.

According to the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report for 2012, "The Russian government demonstrated minimal progress in efforts to protect and assist trafficking victims," last year. The Russian government expressed its "indignation" at the report.

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