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Putin Signs Law Punishing Terrorists' Relatives

By The Moscow Times

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President Vladimir Putin signed an anti-terror bill into law on Sunday requiring the relatives of terrorists to pay for the damages caused by their attacks in an unprecedented move that is to quell fears of terrorist acts compromising the safety of the upcoming Winter Olympics.

Under the law, material and moral damages inflicted as a result of a terrorist attack will be compensated "by the perpetrator and his or her family members, relatives, in-laws and other people, whose lives, health and well-being are significant to him or her because of established personal relations," a statement on the government's legal information website said.

The new law stipulates closer scrutiny of the property of relatives and loved ones of people who have "committed a terrorist act," with the goal of verifying whether such money or goods were acquired legally.

The law was submitted by President Putin in September and was approved by the State Duma

in late October.

The law also includes measures to criminalize the training of terrorists.

People found guilty of training with the aim of carrying out terrorist activities will now face a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and fines of up to 500,000 rubles ($15,700). Anybody found guilty of creating terrorist networks could be sentenced to 20 years behind bars and fines of up to one million rubles.

The new legislation increases penalties for setting up, leading or financing armed groups to up to 10 years. Participation in such groups, including those based abroad, is punishable with up to six years in jail.

The unprecedented law appears to be a response to fears that the spreading insurgency in the North Caucasus could pose a threat to the 2014 Winter Oympics as well as concerns that Russians fighting alongside rebels in Syria could cause problems upon their return to Russia.

Material from The Moscow Times has been included in this report.

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