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Court Hands Prison Terms to 'Cop Killing' Primorsky Partisans

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A court in the far eastern city of Vladivostok on Monday dished out prison sentences to members of the so-called Primorsky Partisans, a criminal group accused of a series of violent offenses in 2010, including the killing of two police officers.

Three of the defendants, Alexander Kovtun, Alexei Nikitin and Vladimir Ilyutikov, were given life sentences, Interfax reported, citing one of its correspondents at the court. Of the other three accused, Roman Savchenko was handed 25 years, Maxim Kirillov received 22, and Vadim Kovtun got eight years and two months.

All six were found guilty of murder, robbery, the attempted murder of law enforcement officers, arms trafficking and a number of related crimes.

The group pleaded guilty only to minor crimes and blamed the more ones on late group members Andrei Sukhorada and Alexander Sladkikh, who were found shot dead in an apartment when police raided in June 2010. Police later said that they had committed suicide.

Lawyers for the group said they would appeal the sentences.

Alexander Kovtun told reporters that he considered his punishment unjust. "Life is given once, you can't rewind it," he said.

However, Yelena Telegina, a senior Primorye prosecutor, said that the "punishment is generally consistent with the verdict of the court," Interfax reported.

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Primorsky Partisans Found Guilty of Being Criminal Group

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