

Ukraine Won't Extradite Russian Accused of Plotting to Kill Putin

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Russian President Vladimir Putin smiles and looks out from a car window upon his arrival at an airport outside Minsk, Belarus.

Ukraine's Prosecutor General has backtracked on an earlier decision to extradite to Russia a man accused of plotting to kill President Vladimir Putin in 2012.

Olga Chertok, the lawyer of suspect Adam Osmayev, told Interfax on Wednesday that the Prosecutor General had decided on Aug. 15 against extraditing Osmayev and that expert examinations were still being conducted into the case.

Osmayev, from Russia's southern republic of Chechnya, was detained in Odessa on Feb. 4, 2012, a month after what investigators believe was a botched training session for an assassination attempt saw one of the other suspects killed by a homemade bomb in the Ukrainian city.

Osmayev's alleged accomplice, Ilya Pyanzin, was extradited to Russia in August 2012 and sentenced to 10 years in prison in September 2013.

Investigators said the men were radical Islamists who planned to blow up a cortege carrying Putin and Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov in Moscow. The Odessa blast and arrests took place shortly before the March 2012 presidential election that brought Putin back to power, prompting some critics to allege that the case had been exaggerated in a bid to boost support for Putin.

The investigation into Osmayev was wrapped up in the fall of 2013, and an Odessa court has been examining court documents since that time.

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