

Ukrainian Filmmaker Accused of Terrorism, Added to Government Blacklist

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A Crimean filmmaker Oleg Sentsov

A Crimean filmmaker being held in detention in Russia on suspicion of plotting explosions in the peninsula's capital has been added to Russia's terrorist register, though he has not yet stood trial on the charges.

Oleg Sentsov, 38, who was outspoken about his opposition to Russia's annexation of Crimea in March, was included on the government terrorist register published on the website of the Federal Financial Monitoring Agency shortly before his defense attorney was due to appeal the extension of his client's detention until January.

Sentsov was detained on May 11 on suspicion of working with the Ukrainian ultranationalist group Right Sector to plant bombs throughout the Crimean capital of Simferopol. Investigators say he and members of Right Sector had planned a series of explosions to sabotage the city's Victory Day parade on May 9.

The film director has maintained his innocence since he was taken into custody, and his arrest prompted a major outcry from both Russian and foreign filmmakers, as well as human rights activists.

His arrest was denounced by Amnesty International, and a number of European filmmakers including Ken Loach, Pedro Almodovar, Wim Wenders and Krzysztof Zanussi published an open letter in June calling for his release.

Russian director Nikita Mikhalkov, who is known for his pro-Kremlin stance, also called for the Crimean filmmaker's release.

Sentsov faces up to 20 years in prison if found guilty of the charges of committing and planning acts of terrorism.

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