Russian 'Mercenary' Accused of Recruiting for Ukrainian Nationalist Group

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A participant looks on during a rally held by members of the far-right radical group Right Sector in Kiev, Ukraine.

A Russian citizen accused of having served as a recruiter for a blacklisted, far-right Ukrainian organization faces mercenary charges, the Interfax news agency quoted investigators as saying Monday.

Alexander Razumov is accused of having undergone military and ideological training in Ukraine with the nationalist Right Sector group starting in March of last year, Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin told Interfax.

The Right Sector, which is banned in Russia as an extremist organization, played a prominent role in the protests that led to the ouster of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych in February 2014.

After returning to Russia in June last year, Razumov sought to recruit fellow countrymen to join the organization. In August, he allegedly met with two policemen in the city of Zelenograd outside of Moscow, encouraging them to work as mercenaries in southeastern Ukraine, Markin told Interfax.

Volunteer battalions associated with Right Sector have been fighting alongside Ukrainian government forces against pro–Russian separatists in the east. Its most infamous battalion, the Azov battalion, is based in the southeastern port of Mariupol and is known for its members' militant nationalism.

Razumov, who was unable to serve in the Russian army because of health problems, also posted inflammatory statements on his VKontakte social media page, which Markin told Interfax aimed to incite nationalistic hatred.

Investigators are now preparing a case against Razumov on charges of inciting hatred and working as a mercenary, the report said.

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