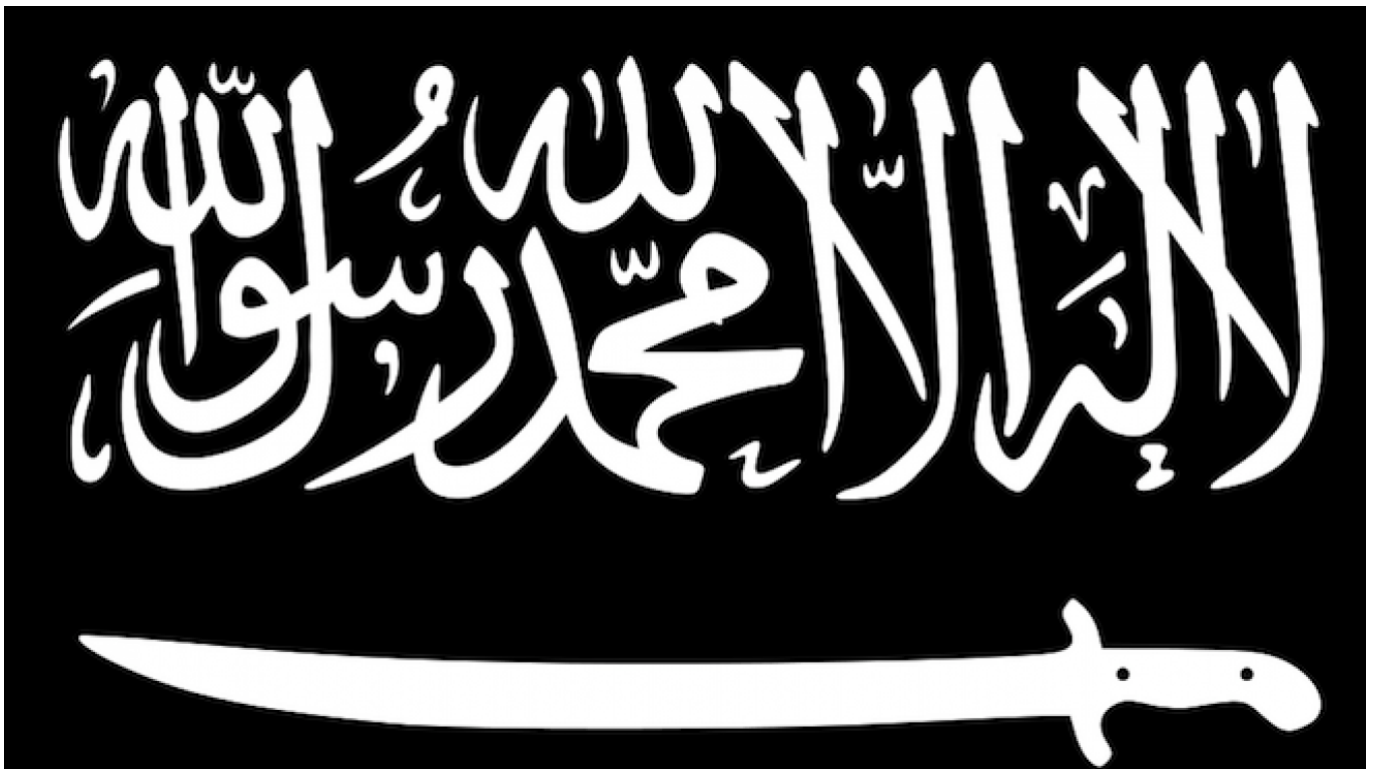


Russian Officials Claim Terrorist Leader Killed in Dagestan

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Flag of the Caucasus Emirate

Four members of the al-Qaida-affiliated Caucasus Emirate terrorist organization, including leader Magomed Suleimanov, were killed by Federal Security Service (FSB) special forces in the republic of Dagestan, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday citing an official statement from the National Anti-Terrorism Committee.

“He had been a member of illegal armed gangs since 2005 and was on the federal wanted list. In April [2015] he was appointed head of the Caucasus Emirate terrorist organization, an underground gang active in the North Caucasus,” spokespeople for the committee were cited by Interfax as saying.

One of the other terrorists killed was Suleimanov's closest associate, Kamil Saidov, “head of the underground gang active in Dagestan and Suleimanov's 'right hand,'” the officials told Interfax. The other two dead were not identified.

According to the Kommersant newspaper, the terrorists were located during a special

operation launched by the FSB on Monday. The operation was set to continue, the report said, quoting a spokesperson from the Anti-Terrorism Committee.

The previous leader of the Caucasus Emirate and once Russia's "most wanted man," Doku Umarov, who claimed responsibility for the large-scale terrorist attacks on Moscow's metro in 2010 and on Domodedovo Airport in 2011, was declared dead several times before the Islamist militant website Kavkaz Center and FSB head Alexander Bortnikov confirmed his death last year.

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