

Russian Man Gets 2 Years in Prison for Fighting Alongside Terrorists in Syria

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A court in the Siberian city of Tyumen sentenced a local resident to two years in a penal colony for fighting in Syria alongside terrorist organizations, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday, citing a statement by the regional branch of the Federal Security Service (FSB).

Vitaly Makarov had been studying in an Islamic theological school in Cairo, according to the FSB.

In 2013 he flew to Turkey, illegally crossed the Syrian border and joined Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar, a jihadist group that fights alongside international terrorist organizations and opposition groups in Syria, the report said.

Makarov fought in Syria for almost a year, for which he received regular payments. In January last year, fearing for his life, he returned to Egypt. In February 2015 he tried to return to Syria, but was deported by Egyptian authorities for violating immigration laws. He was arrested in one of Moscow's airports, the statement by the FSB said.

Makarov was charged with "organizing an illegal militia or becoming a member of an illegal

militia group." He pled guilty and was sentenced to two years in a penal colony.

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