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Lawyer for Detained Russian Servicemen in Ukraine Found Murdered

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A man, who according to Ukraine's state security service (SBU) is named Alexander Alexandrov and is one of two Russian servicemen detained on May 16 by Ukrainian forces, looks on from a defendants' cage as he attends a court hearing in Kiev, Ukraine, Sept. 29, 2015.

Yury Grabovsky, the lawyer for a Russian citizen accused by Ukrainian authorities of terrorism, has been found murdered, the Ukrainian National Association of Lawyers reported Friday.

The association expressed condolences to Grabovsky's friends and family, and hoped that those responsible would be punished. “We have all lost a talented, energetic, rational and dedicated attorney,” the statement said.

Grabovsky mysteriously disappeared in early March. His colleagues have established that on March 5, he was in Odessa, in southern Ukraine — returning to his Kiev office the following day before vanishing.

The man suspected of organizing Grabovsky's disappearance has been arrested by Ukrainian

police, Ukraine's chief military prosecutor Anatoly Matios said, the Interfax news agency reported on March 20.

Grabovsky was the lawyer assigned to Alexander Alexandrov, an alleged Russian military intelligence officer accused by Ukraine of illegally crossing the border, illegal possession of weapons and involvement in a terrorist organization.

Alexandrov — along with another Russian national, Yevgeny Yerofeyev — were detained in Ukraine's Lugansk region on May 16, 2015. Both Russians face life imprisonment if convicted.

Matios said: "The [Grabovsky] operation was planned by former Ukrainian and by Russian intelligence services" during the final stage of court proceedings against the Russians, Interfax reported on March 20.

Alexandrov and Yerofeyev's trial began in Kiev in November 2015. Court hearings were postponed in March 2016 following the disappearance of Grabovsky.

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