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Russian Blogger Fined $8,000 for Asking Russia to "Erase Syria"

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Anton Nossik **Alexander Shcherbak / TASS**

A Moscow court has fined blogger Anton Nossik 500,000 rubles ($8,000) after finding him guilty of extremism.

Prosecutors asked for the Russian-Israeli blogger to be jailed for two years for writing a post where he called on the Kremlin to “erase Syria from the face of the Earth.”

The post called on Russia’s forces to carpet bomb the country and justified civilian deaths. “I will not grieve if Syria is razed to the ground. Moreover, I will be thankful,” he wrote.

Speaking in court on Monday, Nossik asked either to be acquitted or sent to jail, claiming that he was not afraid and had arrived with his suitcase packed for prison.

The blogger was found guilty after a "linguistic analysis" of his statements found that they were extremist in nature.

The judge said that the writing contained, “calls of hatred towards Syrians, based on national-territorial discrimination.”

Nossik has maintained his innocence throughout the trial, with his defense team arguing that his post only “exuberantly supported the actions of Russia’s Air Force.”

Nossik is now set to appeal.

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