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Russia Rejects American Fugitive's Asylum Plea

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Joshua Samuel Aaron **FBI**

Russia has rejected an American hacker's request for political asylum, the TASS news agency reported.

Joshua Samuel Aaron, wanted in the United States for illegally accessing the personal data of 100 million clients of JP Morgan, requested asylum to avoid being deported from Russia. A law enforcement official told TASS the Aaron's request was denied.

"The American, who is awaiting deportation for violating immigration laws in the detention center for foreign nationals, asked for political asylum, as he is facing 170 years in prison in the US," the official said.

The official also said that Aaron mentioned his medical status after being detained, but that his documents failed to convince the court.

Aaron was arrested in May 2016 after he was stopped in Moscow without his passport. It was

later discovered that his six-month visa had expired. A Moscow court fined him 5000 rubles and ordered his expulsion from Russian territory.

U.S. authorities are seeking the extradition of Aaron, who, along with two Israeli citizens, is suspected in a series of cyberattacks on JPMorgan and the asset manager Fidelity between 2012 and 2015. JPMorgan called it one of the largest cyberattacks in U.S. history.

Earlier Bloomberg reported that Russia, which has no extradition treaty with the U.S., offered to return Aaron to the United States in exchange for a "reciprocal act" from the U.S. government. However, this proposal failed to interest the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. Aaron's lawyers were also reportedly working to hammer out a deal with U.S. officials allowing him to return home.

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