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Kremlin Doesn't Trust Reports that Islamic State Captives Are Russians

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Amaq News Agency Screenshot

The Kremlin said on Wednesday it doesn't trust reports that two Russian-speaking men captured by Islamic State in Syria are Russian citizens.

Islamic State, a terrorist group banned in Russia, released a video on Tuesday allegedly showing two Russian soldiers it claims were captured in eastern Syria.

A member of a Russian military order known as the Cossacks told the RBC news outlet later that day that he recognized one of the captives as a fellow Cossack.

The second man was identified as a member of the pro-Kremlin Brothers in Arms veterans group.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was cited by the Interfax news agency telling reporters that Moscow was "undoubtedly concerned about the fate of these citizens, if they are Russian citizens."

“We saw media reports, but they can hardly be taken as official information,” Peskov said, addressing RBC’s story. “More credible confirmation will be of interest."

The Russian-backed Syrian Army said it took the city where the Islamic State claims it captured the soldiers on Sept. 5. A Russian general and at least one other soldier were killed in a siege to reclaim Deir Ezzor.

Moscow initially denied Sept. 28 reports that two of its servicemen had been captured.

Kremlin spokesman Peskov said Russia will verify through “all possible sources” the captured men’s citizenship.

Russian military representatives in Syria and Russia denied reports on Tuesday that its servicement had be captured.

"There have been no incidents linked with any capture of prisoners or entailing losses among Russian servicemen either in the province of Deir al-Zor or in any other Syrian province," the Defense Ministry added in an online statement Tuesday.

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