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Terrorist Recruiters Could Face Life Sentences in Russia

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Vitaly Nevar / TASS

Russian senators have passed legislation that would allow terrorist recruiters to be handed life sentences, amidst an increase in the risk of terror attacks by returning militants from Syria and Iraq.

Russia has been hit with a series of terror attacks this year, including the St. Petersburg metro bombing that killed 15 people in April. Security services have carried out several anti-terror raids in recent months, reportedly foiling attack plots and detaining terror cells within Russia.

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"The law removes legal gaps in the systemic fight against terrorism, establishing the recruiter's key role in the criminal community," Federation Council member Franz Klintsevich told the state-run TASS news agency.

Previously, individuals found guilty of training or recruiting terrorists faced a maximum prison sentence of 10 years and a fine of up to half a million rubles ($8,600).

The new law also introduces stronger punishments for the spreading of "terrorist propaganda."

Recent studies have named Russia the world's biggest source for foreign-born terrorist fighters in Iraq and Syria. Around 400 militants are said to have already returned to Russia.

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