

St. Petersburg Church Bombing Mastermind Sentenced to Five Years

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Kazansky Cathedral/ Dezidor/ Wikimedia Commons

An 18-year-old suspect in a foiled plot to bomb the Kazan Cathedral in St. Petersburg last year has been sentenced to five years in a maximum security prison.

Seven young men, including English tutor and Islamic State (IS) supporter Yevgeny Yefimov, were alleged to have conspired to blow up the Kazan Cathedral last year. Their case made headlines for the CIA's [assistance](#) in locating the suspects last winter, a rare example of Russian-American anti-terror cooperation.

St. Petersburg's Leningrad District Military Court found Yefimov guilty of terrorism and arms manufacturing on Thursday, a court ruling said.

"Yefimov planned to use the explosive device he had been preparing to detonate the Kazan Cathedral on Dec. 17, 2017," the verdict said.

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Yefimov, who pled guilty to the charges, was handed a five year sentence and fined 100,000 rubles (\$1,500), the court system's press office [said](#) on Telegram on Thursday.

Two of Yefimov's accomplices were [sentenced](#) to 2 years and 2.5 years in prison this past June on charges of arms possession and failing to disclose their knowledge of the plot.

At his court hearing, Yefimov said he was instructed to "attack the civilian population within Russia" by IS fighters in Syria and Iraq.

"I accepted Islam, but didn't have a mentor to explain certain questions to me," said Yefimov, explaining in court testimony [quoted](#) by St. Petersburg's Fontanka.ru news website that he was driven to search on the internet in an effort to understand the religion, but instead found people advocating suicide bombings.

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