

Russia Returns Escaped Gay Men to Chechen Police – NGO

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Multiple reports of mass detentions, abductions, torture and human rights abuses against gay men in Chechnya have surfaced in recent years. **Iker Merodio / Flickr (CC BY-ND 2.0)**

Russian police have allegedly detained two gay men who escaped from the republic of Chechnya and handed them over to authorities in their home region, the Russian LGBT Network [reported](#) Thursday.

The LGBT Network had helped the two men, Salekh Magamadov and Ismail Isayev, flee from Chechnya and relocate to the city of Nizhny Novgorod some 400 kilometers east of Moscow in June 2020. According to their lawyer, Magamadov and Isayev had been arrested and tortured by Chechen special police in April 2020 for running an opposition Telegram channel and were later forced to record a video apology.

Related article: [‘Welcome to Chechnya’ Gay Purge Documentary Now Streaming for Russian-Speaking Audiences](#)

The LGBT rights NGO said Magamadov and Isayev went missing on Thursday afternoon.

At around 3 p.m., one of the men called the Russian LGBT Network's emergency assistance coordinator, who heard screaming in the background. Magamadov and Isayev's lawyer Alexander Nemov arrived at their apartment about 30 minutes later and described seeing traces of a scuffle.

Upon submitting a missing persons claim to local police, Nemov found out that the two men had been handed over to Chechen police. They are now being taken to the Chechen town of Gudermes, the LGBT Network said.

Neighbors reported seeing men in black uniforms who appeared to be SWAT team members in their building earlier in the day.

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Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov denies the reports as well the existence of LGBT people altogether in the predominantly Muslim region of Russia's North Caucasus.

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