

Russia Sentences Teens Over ‘Terrorist’ Plot to Blow Up Minecraft FSB Building

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FSB building, Moscow. **Ludvig14 (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

A Russian court has sentenced three Siberian teenagers for terrorism Thursday for activities including plotting to blow up a virtual Federal Security Services (FSB) building in the popular online game Minecraft.

Nikita Uvarov, Denis Mikhailenko and Bogdan Andreyev from Kansk, a town in Siberia's Krasnoyarsk region, were arrested in June 2020 for hanging up political leaflets on the local FSB office that included slogans such as “the FSB is the main terrorist” and support for Azat Miftakhov, an anarchist who was [sentenced](#) to six years in prison. All three suspects were 14 at the time of their arrest.

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The Eastern Military Court in Krasnoyarsk found Uvarov, Mikhailenko and Andreyev guilty of “undergoing training for the purpose of carrying out terrorist activities” on Thursday.

Uvarov was sentenced to five years in a penal colony, while Mikhailenko and Andreyev were handed three and four-year suspended sentences.

Following their arrests, the FSB searched the teens' phones, where they uncovered videos of them making pyrotechnics and allegedly throwing Molotov cocktails at a wall, as well as a plot to blow up a virtual FSB building they had built in Minecraft.

Mikhailenko and Andreyev had pleaded guilty to the charges and were later placed under house arrest.

Uvarov denied his guilt and was placed in a pre-trial detention center, where he claims to have been subjected to mental and physical pressure to confess his guilt.

The teens' family members, former teachers and lawyers have described them as "normal" and "like other kids."

"I always knew where he was, even when they were making these bombs. But it was a small, childish prank, a child's bomb," Mikhailenko's mother [said](#) last year.

"I had a desire to learn something new, I liked to learn something about physics, chemistry, biology, about various famous scientists; I also watched scientific and educational programs," Uvarov said in his address to court Thursday.

The case casts Russian teens into a legal quagmire where they can be targeted by state security forces, a technique human rights campaigners [claim](#) is carried out deliberately to create an atmosphere of fear among young people critical of the government.

"I am not a terrorist, I am not guilty," Uvarov [said](#) in his closing statement in court. "I would just like to finish my studies, get an education and go somewhere far away from here, somewhere I don't irritate anyone from the special services," he added.

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