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Russia Refuses to Designate Hamas a Terrorist Group – Mozhem Obyasnit

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Russian authorities have declined to designate the Hamas militant group as a terrorist organization since none of its members have been convicted of any crimes in the country, the independent news outlet Mozhem Obyasnit reported Wednesday.

The Russian Prosecutor General's Office explained in a letter sent to a politician from St. Petersburg that labeling Hamas as a terrorist group is possible "only when a court verdict confirming unlawful acts comes into force."

The law enforcement body added that it "does not have information about court decisions relating to Hamas members and their activities."

That letter came in response to an inquiry by Sergei Samsuyev, a member of St. Petersburg's municipal council, according to Mozhem Obyasnit.

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Samsuyev wrote to Russia's Prosecutor General Igor Krasnov, arguing that Russian citizens were among the victims of Hamas' surprise attack against Israel on Oct. 7.

"It's important for me and other Russians to understand what kind of justice we can expect from Russia if we find ourselves in the place of those who died or were taken hostage," Samsuyev told Mozhem Obyasnit

"Will the Russian state protect us or will it let us down?" he added, stressing that Russian authorities maintain extensive lists of terrorist organizations.

Mozhem Obyasnit notes that at least five groups affiliated with Hamas — including Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Jihad — are officially designated as terrorist groups in Russia.

The Kremlin has said it maintains ties with both Hamas and Israel in an effort to mediate the conflict and continue to wield influence in the Middle East.

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