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Kazakhstan to Extradite Russian Cybersecurity Expert to Moscow After Snubbing U.S.

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Nikita Kislitsin **GroteckBiz / YouTube**

Kazakhstan will extradite Russian cybersecurity expert Nikita Kislitsin to face hacking and extortion charges in his home country, Moscow's Prosecutor General's Office announced Thursday.

Kislitsin was detained in the Central Asian country in June following an extradition request from the United States, which accused him of buying personal data obtained through the 2012 hack of the now-defunct social media website Formspring.

Kazakhstan refused the U.S. extradition request, a Russian diplomat said at the time.

"Kislitsin's extradition [to Russia] was possible to achieve thanks to the coordinated actions of the Russian Prosecutor General's Office and close cooperation with the authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan," the Russian law enforcement body said in a statement.

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Kislitsin, a department head at Russian cybersecurity firm F.A.C.C.T., is accused of extorting 550,000 rubles ($6,000) in cryptocurrency from an unidentified business in exchange for keeping its server data from being leaked to the public.

Kislitsin's employer, F.A.C.C.T., was previously known as Group-IB. A Russian court sentenced Group-IB cofounder Ilya Sachkov to 14 years in prison this summer on treason charges which he rejects.

Kislitsin faces up to five years in prison on hacking charges and up to seven years for extortion. It is unclear whether or not the cybersecurity expert denies the charges.

The Russian Prosecutor General's Office statement did not specify when Kislitsin is expected to be transferred to Russia.

"The Federal Penitentiary Service has been instructed to receive and deliver the accused to the territory of the Russian Federation," it said.

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