Armenia Denies Extradition Request for Gay Chechen Man Wanted by Russia

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Salman Mukaev. **SOTAvision**

A court in Yerevan on Tuesday rejected Russia's request to extradite a man who fled the republic of Chechnya after being tortured because he was suspected of being gay, an LGBTQ+ rights group said.

Salman Mukaev was detained by security services in his native Chechnya in 2020, after which he was subject to interrogation and torture, according to SK SOS, which helps LGBTQ+ people in Russia's North Caucasus.

Under torture, he was forced to admit to having a romantic relationship with his male friend and agreed to "cooperation" with the authorities by luring gay men online into meeting him and then reporting them to the police.

Mukaev fled to Armenia following his release from detention but has been unable to leave the country after Russian authorities opened a criminal case against him and issued a warrant for his arrest.

An Armenian court denied Russia's request to extradite him, ruling that LGBTQ+ people "are not safe in Chechnya, and in Russia, their rights may be violated due to homophobic laws," according to SK SOS.

Likewise, the Armenian court made note of Russia's Supreme Court [ruling](#) that designated the so–called "international LGBT public movement" as a banned "extremist" organization.

"These official processes are de facto an incentive for society to legalize violence and other forms of persecution of members of the LGBT community," SK SOS cited the court ruling as saying.

According to SK SOS, the court also granted Mukaev asylum and refugee status in Armenia.

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