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Russian Far-Right Group Claims to 'Reinforce' Finnish Border With FSB Guards

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A far-right paramilitary group fighting on the side of Moscow in the Ukraine war claimed Monday that some of its members had begun volunteering to help the Federal Security Service (FSB) to "reinforce" Russia's border with Finland.

Rusich said it "officially entered into cooperation with the FSB border guard service of northwestern Russia to share experience, conduct reconnaissance activities and strengthen the border with Finland." The group said the joint work was being carried out voluntarily.

Russia's FSB has not commented on the alleged volunteer cooperation.

The St. Petersburg-based news website Fontanka, citing an anonymous Rusich commander, reported that the paramilitary group would patrol the Russian-Finnish border in the Leningrad region's Vyborgsky district.

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Finnish media reported that photos posted by Rusich appeared to have been taken near the Saimaa Canal, which connects the Russian city of Vyborg to the Finnish city of Lappeenranta, located just 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the border.

Rusich has reportedly fought alongside pro-Russia separatists in eastern Ukraine since 2014. The group's members frequently display far-right symbols and have been accused of committing war crimes in Ukraine.

The group's leader, Yan Petrovsky, is currently in detention in Finland after he was convicted earlier this year of violating EU sanctions by entering the country under the alias Voislav Torden. Ukrainian authorities have sought his arrest since 2016 for allegedly aiding pro-Russia rebels.

Finland closed its border with Russia in December, accusing Moscow of orchestrating a "hybrid attack" by sending asylum seekers from countries in Africa and the Middle East — a claim the Kremlin denies.

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