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FSB Arrests 'Pro-Ukrainian' Azerbaijani National Accused of Planning Bomb Attacks

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FSB agents. **FSB / TASS**

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said Monday that it arrested a citizen of Azerbaijan accused of plotting attacks on law enforcement buildings in the southern Stavropol region on behalf of Ukraine.

The FSB claimed the man had joined an unidentified Ukrainian "terrorist organization" and conducted surveillance of potential targets in the cities of Stavropol and Yessentuki.

A video shared by state news agencies showed FSB agents arresting the man in broad daylight, then interrogating him as he confessed to preparing an explosive device. The man said he purchased bomb components and hid them in a field.

In a statement, the FSB claimed the man was planning to use his "skills acquired during service in the special forces of Azerbaijan's armed forces."

The highly formal language of the man's confession suggested it may have been scripted. It was not immediately possible to verify the FSB's claims or to determine whether the man spoke under duress.

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The FSB video later showed the man leading agents to the bomb components he had hidden. The man was then taken to a courthouse.

A judge ordered the man to be held in pre-trial detention until Nov. 5. He was charged with planning a terrorist attack, according to the FSB.

State media reported that the Azerbaijani man swore allegiance to a Ukrainian "national liberation battalion," though that detail was absent in the FSB statement.

The arrest comes amid rising tensions between Azerbaijan and Russia. In June, two Azerbaijani men died during mass police arrests in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg. Baku accused Russian law enforcement of torturing and murdering the men.

Azerbaijan has since canceled Russian cultural events in the country, raided the offices of the Kremlin-funded Sputnik news agency and arrested several Russian nationals on organized crime charges.

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