

Exiled Politician Leonid Gozman Jailed 10 Years in Absentia for 'Justifying Terrorism'

November 14, 2025



Leonid Gozman. RFE/RL

A Moscow military court sentenced exiled politician Leonid Gozman to 10 years in prison in absentia for "justifying terrorism," authorities <u>announced</u> on Friday.

Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said the charges stemmed from an interview that Gozman gave to a "foreign media outlet" in 2023.

The exiled news website Mediazona <u>identified</u> the outlet in question as the Russian-language edition of the German tabloid Bild, noting that Gozman was accused of speaking approvingly about Ukrainian drone strikes on Moscow and bomb attacks on a bridge linking annexed Crimea and Russia.

Last year, Gozman was <u>sentenced</u> in absentia to eight and a half years in prison for spreading "fakes" about the Russian military. Russia's state financial watchdog Rosfinmonitoring

added Gozman to its list of "terrorists and extremists" earlier this year.

Gozman fled Russia in September 2022 after serving two consecutive 15-day jail terms for blog posts in 2013 and 2020 that compared the Soviet government to the Nazi regime.

Months earlier, the Justice Ministry labeled Gozman a "foreign agent" and detained him for allegedly failing to inform the authorities about his dual Russian-Israeli citizenship.

Gozman was the last leader of the Union of Right Forces, a small political party that included exiled former Putin adviser Anatoly Chubais and assassinated opposition figure Boris Nemtsov. The party dissolved itself in 2008.

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