The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Military Court Sentences 8 to Life in Prison Over Crimean Bridge Bombing

November 27, 2025



All eight defendants in the bridge bombing trial appear in court. **Erik Romanenko / TASS**

A Russian military court on Thursday sentenced eight men to life in prison over the 2022 bombing of the Crimean Bridge, a key symbol of Russia's claim to the peninsula it annexed in 2014.

The Oct. 8, 2022, blast killed five people and badly damaged a section of the bridge. Russian authorities said explosives had been hidden inside rolls of plastic film that were shipped from Odesa through Bulgaria, Armenia and Georgia using falsified paperwork.

Moscow accused Ukrainian security services of orchestrating the attack, alleging that a Ukrainian agent coordinated the movement of the explosives. Kyiv took responsibility for the bombing nearly a year later, while insisting that those arrested in Russia had been unaware that they were transporting explosives.

Russia's Southern District Military Court in Rostov-on-Don said Thursday that the

defendants were found guilty of carrying out a deadly "terrorist act" and of illegally acquiring weapons as part of an organized criminal group. Two were also convicted of smuggling explosives.

All eight defendants had denied the charges against them. The trial began earlier this year and was held behind closed doors.

Related article: Russian State Media Stays Light on Coverage of U.S.-Backed Ukraine Peace Deal

After the sentencing on Thursday, Oleg Antipov, a transportation company CEO and one of the defendants, insisted the entire group was innocent and said they had cooperated fully with law enforcement officials during the investigation into the bridge bombing.

"Not a single person testified against us. Every witness says we're innocent. All the evidence says we're innocent. All 116 volumes [of the case] say we're innocent. Show people the truth," Antipov said in a video published by the independent news outlet Mediazona.

The Memorial human rights group designated all eight men as political prisoners, arguing that their cooperation with investigators indicates they had no links to Ukrainian intelligence services.

"All of them insist they were simply doing their regular work and had no knowledge that explosives were hidden in the cargo," Memorial said in a statement.

The Crimean Bridge, completed in 2018, stretches 19 kilometers (12 miles) across the Kerch Strait and has served as a crucial logistics route for Russian forces amid the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine has repeatedly targeted the bridge since February 2022.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/11/27/military-court-sentences-8-to-life-in-prison-over-crimean-bridge-bombing-a91253