

Russia Adds Telegram Founder Pavel Durov to 'Terrorist and Extremist' List

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Founder and CEO of Telegram Pavel Durov. **REUTERS / Albert Gea**

Russia's financial watchdog Rosfinmonitoring on Thursday added Telegram founder Pavel Durov to its list of "terrorists and extremists," a day after the FSB security service issued a warrant for his arrest on charges of facilitating terrorist activities.

Law enforcement authorities have accused Durov and Telegram of failing to remove content on the messaging platform used by Ukrainian intelligence services and "extremist" groups to coordinate sabotage, cyber fraud and armed attacks inside Russia.

The charge of aiding and abetting terrorism carries a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

Durov, who lives in Dubai and also holds French and UAE citizenship, previously responded to reports that the FSB was investigating him by [accusing](#) the Russian authorities of trying to "fabricate pretexts" for a total ban on Telegram.

Russian banks are legally required to freeze the assets of individuals on the Rosfinmonitoring

list and halt all financial services to them. Rosfinmonitoring's list of "terrorists and extremists" includes nearly 22,400 individuals and almost 900 organizations.

Related article: [I'm in Russia. By Blocking Telegram, the Kremlin Is Shooting Itself in the Foot.](#)

Durov's arrest warrant and "terrorist and extremist" designation comes months after Russian state regulators introduced a number of restrictions on Telegram for allegedly serving as a haven for criminal activity.

Telegram, which has around 90 million users in Russia, has become difficult to use without a virtual private network, or VPN, as the state media regulator Roskomnadzor slows download speeds and blocks video and voice calls on the platform.

French authorities are currently investigating Durov for alleged failure to cooperate with judicial authorities in removing illegal content on Telegram. He was arrested in France in August 2024 and indicted as part of that investigation, though he was released last year.

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