

Russian Passports Involved in Thwarted Palestinian Terror Plot

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Palestinian terror cell affiliated with the al-Qaida movement planned to send suicide bombers with fake Russian passports into Israel to stage a series of major attacks, before being thwarted by Israeli security services, a news report said.

Jerusalem's International Conference Center and the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv were among the intended targets of the terrorists, who started planning their action last fall, Israel's Ynet news agency reported Wednesday, citing investigators from the Israel Security Agency, the Shin Bet.

One of the suspects, 24-year-old east Jerusalem resident Iyad Abu Sarah, planned to travel to Syria and help five al-Qaida-affiliated bombers cross into Israel under fake Russian passports, the investigators said.

Russian citizens currently enjoy visa-free travel to Israel.

Israeli security service also arrested two other Palestinian suspects, identified as Rubin Abi Najma, 30, and Ala Aanam, 22, both from the West Bank. All appeared to have been recruited by a jihadist from Gaza via online communication and social networks and to be associated with the Salafi movement.

The Salafi movement, which follows a strict and literal interpretation of Islam and espouses violent jihad against civilians, has been linked to a series of recent terror attacks in Russia, where Salafist cells have been mushrooming in the region of Dagestan and beyond in recent years.

It was not immediately clear whether Abu Sarah and his associates had any direct connections with Salafi terrorists in Dagestan, nor whether they had acted independently in acquiring fake Russian documents.

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