
**BULGARIAN FORMER INTELLIGENCE CHIEF HANDED SECOND SENTENCE ON
EMBEZZLEMENT CHARGES**

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Prosecutors pressed charges against Kirov in January 2017 and filed the lawsuit with the Sofia Military Court in spring 2017, the statement said.

In addition to Kirovs prison sentence, the court ordered the confiscation of half of his assets.

A second defendant, Dimitar Lidarev, was sentenced to three years in jail with five years probation on charges of aiding and abetting. Lidarev was accused that he had drafted fraudulent documents, on Kirovs orders, and then cashed them National Intelligence Services financial department.

The charges were separate from the earlier indictment against Kirov, who was accused of embezzling 4.7 million leva over a period of five years, but covered the same time frame of 2007-2011, when Kirov was director of the NIS.

Kirov was found guilty of embezzlement on the earlier charges and sentenced to 10 years in jail, with the sentence upheld on appeal, although the appellate court acquitted Kirov on charges of document fraud and reduced his ban on holding office to 13 years. The countrys Supreme Court of Cassation later ruled to return the case to the appellate court, saying that some procedural mistakes impacted Kirovs rights as a defendant.

The prosecutors office said that it uncovered the alleged embezzlement following an additional investigation ordered by the Military Court during the earlier lawsuit. The statement said that the new charges were similar to the earlier indictment, in that Kirov is accused of falsifying records to justify non-existent expenses to cover up the alleged embezzlement.

An appointee of former president Georgi Purvanov, Kirov was the head of the service between February 2003 and January 2012, after which he served briefly as an adviser on security issues to Prime Minister Boiko Borissov, during the latters first term as head of government.

At the time of the first indictment against Kirov, Bulgarian media have described him as a close ally of Purvanovs and claimed that Kirov was one of the biggest opponents to releasing communist-era State Security archive files Bulgarias dossiers commission during his term as head of the intelligence service.

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