

## **Two Russians Named as Organizers of Montenegro's Alleged Coup Plot** **World**

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**What does it take to organize an anti-democratic plot in Eastern Europe? The formula is usually the same: lots of Kremlin-supplied cash; a couple of Russian ringleaders and a few local talent thugs – read Serbians in this case – and you ready for action. The following RFE/RL article pours more light on this particular version of the Putin-two-step-polka. Photo: Montenegrin opposition Democratic Front leader Andrija Mandic (right) stands next to a supporter wearing a t-shirt with a picture of Russian President Vladimir Putin before a court hearing in Podgorica on September 6.**

From RFE/FL, Last Updated: September 06, 2017 10:38 GMT Two alleged Russian intelligence operatives have been named as the main organizers of what authorities say was a coup attempt against Montenegro's pro-Western government as the trial of 14 suspected coup plotters opened in Podgorica on September 6. The defendants, mostly Serbs, are charged with "creating a criminal organization" with the aim of undermining Montenegro's constitutional order and thwarting the government's bid to join NATO. The two Russians are said by the prosecutor to be military intelligence operatives for the Kremlin. They have also been charged with terrorism. The pair, identified as Eduard Shishmakov and Vladimir Popov, are accused of organizing and coordinating the alleged coup attempt from neighboring Serbia. They remain at large and are being tried in absentia. State authorities in Montenegro say Serbian and Russian nationalists plotted to occupy parliament during the country's October 2016 parliamentary elections, assassinate then-Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic, and install a pro-Russia leadership to halt Montenegro's bid to join NATO. The defendants include opposition Democratic Front lawmakers Andrija Mandic and Milan Knezevic, nine citizens of Serbia, one other Montenegrin, and the two Russians. [hellip;]

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