



Observatoire ARGA

ANALYTICAL REPORT

**On the transformation of an economic and corporate dispute into
criminal-and-extradition prosecution
(using the case of Yury Viktorovich Sazonov as an example)**

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ABSTRACT

This report is a comprehensive academic study of the legal, institutional, and political-economic mechanisms through which economic and corporate disputes in the Russian Federation are transformed into criminal cases, followed by the use of international tools of search, financial pressure, and extradition. The case of Yury Viktorovich Sazonov is examined as a representative example.

The report is based on an analysis of judicial acts, materials from the bankruptcy proceedings, economic expert assessments, extradition-related documents, INTERPOL procedures, as well as applicable norms of international, European, and financial-compliance law. The research is oriented toward an expert audience within international institutions, including INTERPOL, FATF, OFAC, Council of Europe bodies, and UN structures.

I. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

The report has been prepared using the following methodological approaches:

- doctrinal legal analysis;
- comparative legal analysis;
- institutional analysis;
- economic-and-legal analysis of bankruptcy procedures;
- analysis of compliance risks and secondary sanctions risks.

The source base includes:

- judgments and decisions of the commercial (arbitrazh) courts of the Russian Federation;

- materials of the bankruptcy (competitive) proceedings;
- official certificates issued by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- procedural documents from the criminal case;
- materials from the extradition proceedings in Greece;
- INTERPOL documents;
- applications to and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights;
- norms of international public law and financial law.

II. INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF THE CASE

The case of Yury Sazonov is formed at the intersection of:

National criminal law, applied expansively and retroactively.

Commercial (arbitrazh) and bankruptcy law, formally completed and subsequently reinterpreted.

International law-enforcement mechanisms, including INTERPOL and extradition procedures.

A financial-compliance track, engaging issues of sanctions risks, confiscations, and cross-border asset control.

Such an overlap of tracks creates a high degree of legal uncertainty and systemic risk.

III. BANKRUPTCY AS A LEGAL BASIS AND THE LIMITS OF CRIMINAL JURISDICTION

In the classical model of continental law, bankruptcy constitutes an exhaustive legal regime for addressing insolvency. After the introduction of bankruptcy liquidation (competitive) proceedings:

- the powers of management bodies are terminated;
- the possibility of managerial decisions by third parties is excluded;
- responsibility for economic decisions is concentrated in the hands of the bankruptcy trustee (insolvency administrator) under judicial supervision.

In the case of Yury Sazonov, this principle was formally observed, but later effectively nullified by a criminal-law reconstruction of events that had already received legal assessment within the commercial-court (arbitrazh) process.

IV. CRIMINALIZATION OF ECONOMIC DECISIONS

An analysis of the criminal track of the case reveals the following systemic deviations:

- absence of an established damage (harm);
- substitution of market assessment with criminal interpretation;
- disregard of independent price-formation sources;
- absence of a provable causal link.

An economic expert assessment, based on official data from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, confirms that the products sold corresponded to market conditions. Nevertheless, these circumstances were not used as the foundation for the criminal-law assessment.

V. PROCEDURAL DEFECTS AND SELECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT

The report records indicators of selective criminal prosecution, including:

- reopening of a previously terminated criminal case without new facts;
- in absentia prosecution with only formal notification;
- expansive interpretation of the elements of the offence;
- failure to observe the principle of legal certainty.

Such elements correspond to the internationally recognized category of selective prosecution.

VI. EXTRADITION, INTERPOL AND THE RISK OF INSTITUTIONAL MISUSE

The use of INTERPOL channels and extradition procedures in this case demonstrates potential risks of misuse of international law-enforcement mechanisms:

- a criminal case with a defective evidentiary basis is used as grounds for international search;
- proper fair-trial guarantees are absent;
- extradition pressure is exerted through the executive branch of the receiving state.

For INTERPOL, such cases are of fundamental importance in the context of compliance with Article 3 of the Organization's Constitution and the Rules on the Processing of Data.

VII. HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-REFOULEMENT

The combination of factors in the case of Yury Sazonov indicates an elevated risk of violations of:

- Article 2 of the ECHR (right to life);
- Article 3 of the ECHR (prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment);
- Article 6 of the ECHR (right to a fair trial).

Extradition in conditions where effective guarantees are absent may lead to irreversible consequences, which directly contradicts the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

VIII. FINANCIAL-COMPLIANCE AND SANCTIONS TRACK

The case of Yury Sazonov also affects the sphere of interest of:

- FATF, in terms of the risk of abuse of criminal law for the purpose of asset redistribution;
- OFAC, in terms of secondary sanctions risks associated with confiscations and cross-border assets;
- international financial institutions that must take into account the risk of politically motivated prosecutions.

Collective confiscations, pressure on relatives, and the absence of individualized responsibility create elevated risks of non-compliance with AML/CFT and ESG compliance standards.

IX. POLITICAL-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The report emphasizes that criminal-law instruments in such cases do not operate in isolation, but in the context of:

- asset redistribution in strategic sectors;
- conflicts between private capital and quasi-state interests;
- the use of coercive (law-enforcement) structures as an arbiter of corporate disputes.

This context is subject to separate analysis at the next stage.

X. TWO-STAGE RESPONSE STRATEGY

Stage I. Protective

- preventing extradition;
- building an international human-rights protection track;
- institutional notification of international bodies.

Stage II. Active

- protection of assets;
- restoration of property rights;
- international property and compliance procedures;
- analysis of the corporate dispute and political-economic pressure.

XI. CONCLUSION

The case of Yury Viktorovich Sazonov is a demonstrative example of the systemic transformation of an economic conflict into criminal-and-extradition prosecution with international consequences.

For international institutions, this case has value as:

- an indicator of risks of misuse of criminal and extradition law;
- an example of threats to the independence of international law-enforcement mechanisms;
- a basis for developing preventive standards of institutional protection.

Soering v. United Kingdom (ECHR, 1989) — <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-57619>

Othman (Abu Qatada) v. United Kingdom (ECHR, 2012) —
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European Convention on Human Rights —
https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/convention_eng.pdf

ECHR Guide on Extradition and Expulsion —
https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/guide_extradition_expulsion_eng.pdf

ECHR Guide on Article 3 (Prohibition of Torture) —
https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/guide_art_3_eng.pdf

INTERPOL Constitution — <https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Legal-framework/Constitution>

INTERPOL Repository of Practice on Article 3 — <https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Legal-framework/Repository-of-Practice>

INTERPOL Rules on the Processing of Data (RPD) — <https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Legal-framework/Data-processing>

FATF Risk-Based Approach Guidance — <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/en/publications/Fatfrecommendations/Risk-based-approach.html>

FATF Guidance on Proliferation Financing Risk Assessment — <https://www.fatf-gafi.org/en/publications/Fatfrecommendations/Guidance-proliferation-financing-risk-assessment.html>

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International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights — <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention – Methods of Work — <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-arbitrary-detention/methods-work>

UNHCR Advisory Opinion on Non-Refoulement — <https://www.unhcr.org/4d9486929.pdf>

Council of Europe – European Convention on Extradition (1957) — <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treaty-num=024>

OFAC – Sanctions Compliance Guidance — <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/sanctions-compliance-and-guidance>

OFAC – A Framework for OFAC Compliance Commitments — https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/126/framework_ofac_cc.pdf

OECD – Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct — <https://www.oecd.org/investment/due-diligence-guidance-for-responsible-business-conduct.htm>

Cambridge University Press – Sanctions and International Law (academic collection) — <https://www.cambridge.org/core/what-we-publish/collections/sanctions-and-international-law>

Materials used for preparation (folder link):

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1MWoiDmmLu6vm2Ix7XZBwyAoDDsnbf9k_?usp=sharing

ARGA Observatoire considers this report as part of a broader analytical effort aimed at identifying and preventing abuses of international legal and financial instruments.