



## THE CONCEPT OF SPREADING EXTREMIST IDEAS ON THE INTERNET AND THE CONDITIONS TO BE PROVEN.

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15430349>

**Abstract:** This article discusses the concept of spreading extremist ideas on the internet, the conditions that need to be proven in criminal cases related to these crimes, and the investigative actions to be carried out. It also analyzes the problems related to gathering evidence in such cases, contradictions in certain norms, and shortcomings in criminal procedural legislation. Furthermore, the article offers suggestions for amendments and additions to the criminal procedural legislation, as well as recommendations for their application in judicial-investigative practice.

**Keywords:** Internet, extremism, extremist activity, dissemination, forensic aspects, religious extremism, foreign experience, investigative actions.

The commission of extremism-related crimes worldwide leads to the destabilization of the socio-political situation in specific countries, forcible changes to constitutional order, and undermines states' roles and images in the international arena, causing discontent in society.

In the current era of globalization, the rapid development of the internet and digital technologies has a profound impact on all spheres of society. Unfortunately, these opportunities are being used not only for positive but also for negative purposes. In particular, the Internet is becoming a means of spreading extremist ideas, recruiting members for radical groups, and mass manipulation. This is one of the serious problems that threatens the security of not just one country, but all of humanity.

The dissemination of extremist ideas through the Internet ensures their rapid and uncontrolled reach to a wide audience. The global community is developing legal, preventive, and information security measures to counter this threat. However, the role of forensic science is invaluable in effectively analyzing such actions and conducting preventive and investigative activities. Aspects such as the unique nature of crimes in the Internet environment, non-traditional methods of identifying and searching for evidence, and the anonymity of cybercriminals require specialized study of this field.

In recent years, the activities of 68 terrorist organizations in the USA, 47 in Russia, 78 in Great Britain, 15 in Turkey, and 22 in Uzbekistan have been banned. Additionally, 5,342 instances of radical content in Russia, 1,133 in Kazakhstan, 167 in Kyrgyzstan, and 2,417 in Tajikistan have been prohibited by court orders. In Uzbekistan, the number of materials prepared by banned organizations (totaling 1,389, including: Facebook-203, Telegram-713, Instagram-226, YouTube-135, Odnoklassniki-35, TikTok-44, websites-13, other sources-20) [1] is increasing year by year. This necessitates an effective fight against extremism-related crimes and the improvement of the theory and practice of investigating these crimes.

As the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M. Mirziyoyev noted, "Today, all countries of the region are facing threats of terrorism, religious extremism, transnational crime, and drug trafficking. Effective counteraction to these threats can only be ensured

through joint efforts, within the framework of practical cooperation mechanisms between the countries of the region. We firmly believe that it is necessary to abandon the division of security threats into 'one's own and others ' and to practically adhere to the principle of 'integrated security.'" [2]

In this regard, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 01.07.2021 No. UP-6255 "On Approving the National Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Combating Extremism and Terrorism for 2021-2026" has been published. This decree puts forward issues of combating the use of the World Wide Web for extremist and terrorist purposes, improving the regulatory framework in the field of combating extremism and terrorism, and improving measures for legal prosecution and accountability for committing and financing extremist and terrorist acts.

Although many measures are being taken worldwide, including in Uzbekistan, to prevent extremism, it is no secret that the number of crimes of this type is increasing every year. In particular, investigators of internal affairs bodies in our country investigated 581 criminal cases in 2021, 762 in 2022, 840 in 2023, and 1070 in 2024. Crime related to extremism increased by 31.2% in 2022, 41.5% in 2023, and 74% in 2024. The above statistics are only statistics of identified and initiated criminal cases. There are also many crimes that have been committed and remain unsolved. Therefore, the effective conduct of pre-investigation checks and investigative actions on this type of crime is becoming increasingly relevant. Currently, various practices are being applied in conducting pre-investigation checks and investigative actions on this type of crime, mainly due to the incomplete conduct of investigative actions for the appointment and interrogation of an expert examination, incomplete compliance with the requirements for the formalization of evidence in the pre-investigation check process, which leads to the consideration of cases in appellate and cassation proceedings in courts without proper assessment of evidence in criminal cases, as a result of the fact that these crimes are mainly committed in foreign countries, it remains unclear by whom they are committed, the lack of methodologies related to the exposure of cells belonging to extremist organizations, which requires filling in the gaps in the current legislation hindering the investigation of crimes related to extremism, and the development of specific methods and techniques for investigating crimes related to extremism in forensics.

The Internet serves as the main means of spreading extremist ideas around the world. Currently, "the world's population is 8 billion 177 million 128 thousand 622 people, of which the number of internet users is 6 billion 581 million 579 thousand 434 people"[3]. This is a very large number, not counting young children and elderly people. The role and importance of the Internet in society is growing every year, which leads to even greater changes in social, economic, and cultural relations. Also, the Internet, as the most active mass media, contributes to the spread of extremist ideas. The rapid and effective dissemination of extremist ideas through the internet in modern society is becoming a global threat.

The spread of extremism through the Internet has become one of the most pressing and dangerous socio-political problems of today. Various categories of people, especially young people, are influenced by extremist ideas and encourage their dissemination online. To correctly and effectively identify and combat similar Internet threats, a criminalistic analysis-based approach is necessary. It is also very important to understand the spread of extremist ideas on the Internet, its significance and risks, as well as to develop an effective preventive and punitive policy towards this problem.



Extremist ideas are disseminated in the form of materials. "Distribution of materials means hanging them, publishing them in the mass media, appearing in front of an audience, on television, radio, putting up leaflets, throwing them into homes, that is, publishing the indicated information in oral or written form to at least one person. Materials should be understood as leaflets, posters, video cassettes, etc." [9]. Within the framework of the study, cases related to the dissemination of extremist ideas exclusively on the Internet are examined.

The Internet is a global network that allows for the rapid and widespread dissemination of information, which has also become an effective tool for the dissemination of extremist ideas. The development of modern technologies allows extremist groups to convey their ideas to a wide audience, both covertly and openly.

There is no single definition of the word internet in the whole world. The International Telecommunication Union defines the Internet as follows: "The Internet is a system of interconnected computer networks that serves to connect devices around the world." In many theoretical sources, there is a definition: "The Internet is a global information and communication system that connects various types of computer networks and ensures information exchange around the world." Although the word Internet is not defined separately in the legislation of our country, it is interpreted from a practical and functional point of view in several regulatory legal acts. In particular, the Law "On Informatization," the Law "On Electronic Government," and other laws and regulations are interpreted with the words "information resources," "information system," and "information and communication technologies." Based on the above concepts, it can be concluded that "The dissemination of extremist ideas on the Internet is the process of disseminating ideas prohibited by law through the Internet, aimed at inciting hatred, conflict, interethnic or interreligious enmity in society."

Article 2441, Part 3, Clause "g" of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan establishes liability for the dissemination of extremist ideas on the Internet.

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According to our criminal procedure legislation, the circumstances that must be proven in each criminal case are defined. That is, "in order to send the case to court with an indictment or bill of indictment and issue a guilty verdict, the following must be proven:

1) object of the crime; nature and amount of damage caused by the crime, circumstances characterizing the personality of the victim;

2) the time, place, method of the crime committed, as well as other circumstances specified in the Criminal Code; the causal link between the act and the resulting socially dangerous consequences;

3) the commission of the crime by this person;

4) whether the crime was committed with direct or indirect intent or as a result of negligence or self-confidence, the motives and motives of the crime;

5) circumstances characterizing the personality of the accused, the defendant"[11].

Although these circumstances that need to be proven are common to each crime, they are unique depending on the types of crimes. In particular, cases requiring proof in the dissemination of extremist ideas on the Internet may differ slightly from traditional crimes. Although paragraph 1 of Article 82 of the Criminal Procedure Code indicates that the object of the crime; the nature and amount of damage caused by the crime, and the circumstances characterizing the victim's personality must be proven, it would be illogical to recognize any person as a victim in a case related to the actions of spreading extremist ideas on the Internet. Therefore, in this type of crime, circumstances relating to the victim's personality are not established. However, the object of this type of crime is always public order and public safety. Therefore, it is necessary to determine whether the act committed in this type of crime poses a threat to public order and public safety. Thus, while the circumstances requiring proof in the dissemination of extremist ideas on the Internet are specific, they must be clarified based on the general requirements for all these crimes.

When disseminating extremist ideas on the Internet, the following circumstances must be proven:

1. Whether material containing extremist ideas has actually been distributed on the Internet. This circumstance is an external manifestation of the commission of a crime and represents a specific form of distribution of materials of extremist content. Including: placement of text, photo, audio, or video materials on the Internet (website, blog, social network, etc.); sending materials of the above content through messengers to at least one person; the existence of a real opportunity for others to see the materials (i.e., the material is not on private private blogs, but on a network that everyone (at least one person) can see); in some cases, the possibility of seeing many people is increased by clicking on likes for materials of this content.



2. The fact that the material is actually of a content that promotes extremism: incitement of interethnic, interreligious, or racial hatred; calls for the incitement of conflict and hostility in society; propaganda of violence, terrorism, hostile actions, violence against dissenters; opposition to the constitutional order of the state, calls for its change. This situation needs to be clarified based on the concept of extremism.

3. Who committed the act of spreading extremist ideas on the Internet: whether the person who committed the crime turned 16 years old, whether the content of the material actually belongs to this person. In addition, it is necessary to determine the number of criminals, the surname, first name, patronymic, gender, age, and questionnaire data of each. It is also necessary to obtain information about the personality of each of the criminals, which, in turn, will allow us to answer such questions as the causes, true goals, and motives of criminal behavior. Moreover, it is necessary to investigate the connections that unite the perpetrators, without which it is impossible to correctly determine the role of each of them in the criminal group as a whole and in the commission of this crime in particular. Ultimately, it is necessary to create a reliable information model of the criminal, which is important not only for identifying him, searching for him, choosing tactics when working with the criminal, but also for assessing his social danger and imposing a just punishment.

4. The subjective attitude of the person who committed the act of spreading extremist ideas on the Internet towards the commission of the crime. This type of crime is committed only with direct intent: when the person realized their actions, foresaw the consequences, and wished to commit them. In this case, the person must understand that the material being distributed promotes extremism. Moreover, through their disseminated material, individuals should aim to foster an uncompromising attitude in society, increase distrust towards state bodies, and encourage citizens to oppose the constitutional order.

5. What means were used to carry out the act of spreading extremist ideas on the Internet: computers, laptops, smartphones, Wi-Fi networks, VPN (virtual personal networks) and similar means of communication; where extremist ideas were spread: social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, video hosting, etc.;

6. How were extremist ideas disseminated on the Internet: in the form of video, audio, photo, text;

7. In attempts to spread extremist ideas on the Internet, it is necessary to clarify the source of the material. Determining the source of extremist material serves to prevent such crimes and ensure the inevitability of responsibility. Usually, it is somewhat more difficult to determine the source of this type of crime. The source of this type of crime is located outside the Republic of Uzbekistan, or it is impossible to determine to whom the source actually belongs. Therefore, today in judicial and investigative practice, the source part of materials of extremist content remains open.

8. The presence or absence of criminal consequences as a result of attempts to spread extremist ideas on the Internet: the presence or absence of mass hooliganism and violence, anti-law rallies, riots, attacks as a result of these disseminated materials; the influence on crimes committed by other persons. If the above-mentioned consequences occurred as a result of the committed action, the act may be recognized as an aggravating circumstance or additionally qualified with another crime.

9. Conditions that contributed to the spread of extremist ideas on the Internet. By identifying the conditions that contributed to the commission of the crime, it is possible to

establish aggravating and mitigating circumstances. In addition, it is possible to develop planned actions to prevent the further occurrence of the crime.

10. Determine the time and place of attempts to spread extremist ideas on the Internet. Determining the time of commission of these crimes clarifies whether the statute of limitations for prosecution for the crime has expired. In addition, by determining the place of the crime, it will be possible to determine whether the crime occurred on the territory of Uzbekistan or on the territory of another state, to determine the territorial jurisdiction of the investigation.

Circumstances requiring proof can be individualized and expanded for each criminal case. However, it will be based on the above general rules.

Clarifying the circumstances that need to be proven requires us to develop and sequentially implement a plan for future investigative actions.

Based on the above analysis, the fact that during the investigation of crimes related to the dissemination of extremist ideas on the Internet, the issue of initiating a criminal case (separation from a criminal case against a person) against unknown persons who initially posted such material (issuance of a private court ruling on the initiation of a criminal case in accordance with Article 417 of the Criminal Procedure Code) is not raised, when the source of the material obtained and posted on a certain page of the social network, on a certain website, in a publication of a mass media or in another place is not identified, remains a serious problem in the investigation of this type of crime today.

For comparative analysis, when investigating crimes related to the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, their analogues, or psychotropic substances, the source of narcotic drugs, their analogues, or psychotropic substances is usually determined. If it is not established, a criminal case is initiated against unknown persons, and investigative actions are carried out. This, in turn, ensures the effective implementation of the fight against crime.

Without initiating criminal proceedings against persons who initially posted materials of extremist content on the Internet, it is impossible to determine their motives and motives for committing a crime, to ensure the principle of "necessary responsibility." However, our criminal legislation stipulates that "Every person whose actions contain elements of a crime must be held accountable."

In our opinion, today, at the legislative level, or at the level of the resolution of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, or at the level of interdepartmental regulatory legal acts - when investigating and considering criminal cases by investigative and judicial bodies, as well as within the framework of civil and administrative proceedings, in the event that the person (persons) who prepared the material recognized as extremist are not identified, within the framework of the investigation of a new criminal case, in order to identify the perpetrators and ensure the inevitability of responsibility, the resolution of the issue of separating (initiating) a criminal case should be mandatory.

In conclusion, the dissemination of extremist ideas through the internet is currently one of the types of crimes that pose a serious threat to public safety. In the detection and exposure of these crimes, first of all, it is important to correctly assess the content, purpose, and consequences of the disseminated information. At the same time, in the process of proving a crime, it is necessary to determine its subjective and objective aspects, i.e., the intent, purpose of the criminal, and the social danger of their actions. Improvement of current investigative

actions, introduction of modern methods of collecting evidence, and elimination of existing shortcomings in the legislation are one of the main conditions for conducting an effective fight in this area. From this point of view, the introduction of amendments and additions to the criminal procedure legislation, as well as the development of specific recommendations for their correct application in judicial and investigative practice, is one of the urgent tasks.

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