

# [***FACT CHECK: Russia Claims Ukraine, United States And Great Britain Behind Moscow Terrorist Attack; 'The U.S. and Ukraine have denied having to do anything with the attack. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has claimed responsibility, with U.S. intelligence supporting the claim'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BP8-DVM1-JBFB-H002-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/GettyImages-869820970-scaled-e1673628737716.jpg)

The director of the Russian Federal Security Services (FSB) [*claimed*](https://twitter.com/Faytuks/status/1772598593779552332) the United States, Ukraine and Great Britain were responsible for the Moscow terrorist attack.

The USA, Britain and Ukraine are behind the terrorist attack in Crocus City Hall, FSB director Bortnikov says - TASS

- Faytuks News Δ (@Faytuks) [*March 26, 2024*](https://twitter.com/Faytuks/status/1772598593779552332?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

**Verdict: Misleading**

The U.S. and Ukraine have denied having any involvement with the attack. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has claimed responsibility, with U.S. intelligence supporting the claim.

**Fact Check:**

Several terrorists attacked Crocus City Hall, a popular music venue in Moscow, killing over 130 people and injuring dozens more as they set the building on fire, according to [*The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/23/world/europe/moscow-concert-hall-attack-what-we-know.html) (NYT).

The Russian government has blamed Ukraine, the U.S. and Great Britain for the attack, according to [*BBC News*](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-68663043). For example, FSB director Alexander Bortnikov blamed the three countries on March 26, Reuters [*reported*](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russias-fsb-chief-says-us-britain-ukraine-behind-moscow-attack-tass-2024-03-26/).

This claim lacks evidence. ISIS took credit for the attack, according to the NYT. ISIS-affiliated media released footage from the attack, according to [*Meduza*](https://meduza.io/en/news/2024/03/24/isis-affiliated-media-publish-graphic-body-cam-footage-from-moscow-terrorist-attack). The terrorists in the released footage match videos of the gunmen that were shared on social media during the attack, the outlet reported.

The NYT also [*reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/25/world/europe/moscow-attack-suspects-russia-evidence.html) that the men captured by Russian authorities appeared to have matched the terrorists in the released ISIS video.

“The identical clothing and other corresponding details suggest they carried out the attack. A video of one of the suspects being detained, for instance, shows him wearing a light brown T-shirt with a distinctive logo on the left breast and pants with a Boss label: Those details match the clothes worn by a gunman in propaganda footage of the attack released by the Islamic State, a.k.a. ISIS,” the NYT reported.

Experts told Check Your Fact that while it was hard to prove a negative, there was no evidence that pointed to U.S, Ukrainian and British involvement.

[*Robert English*](https://dornsife.usc.edu/profile/robert-english/), an associate professor of international relations and the director of Central European Studies at the University of Southern California, said that with “publicly available evidence it appears that this claim is incorrect.”

“We have not seen any documents, communications, or other materials that link Ukraine to the organization, funding, training, or assault planning of the attack in Moscow on 22 March,” English said in an email to Check Your Fact.

English warned, though, it was “not proof that Ukraine, the UK and US did *not*have something to do with the attack.” [***(RELATED: Donald Trump Claims He Defeated ISIS In 4 Weeks)***](https://checkyourfact.com/2024/03/22/fact-check-trump-isis-4-weeks/)

“It is nearly impossible to prove a negative, and we do know that Ukraine has carried out various bombings and assassinations *with at least the tacit approval* of the U.S. and U.K.,” English said, citing the car bombing of Daria Dugina ([*believed*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-believes-ukraine-was-behind-assassination-of-putin-allys-daughter-11665014553) to be carried out by Ukraine) and the destruction of the Nord Stream pipeline (The Washington Post [*reported*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/11/11/nordstream-bombing-ukraine-chervinsky/) that a former senior Ukrainian officer and a group of Ukrainians were responsible for the attack).

“However Moscow's description of a complex months-long recruitment, training, and execution mission on Russian soil still seems quite farfetched. Unless they produce hard evidence for it, it remains far more likely that the terror attack of 22 March was entirely planned and executed by ISIS,” English added.

[*Mark Cancian*](https://www.csis.org/people/mark-f-cancian), a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, told Check Your Fact in an email that “it's hard to prove a negative.”

“We can say that there is no evidence produced of U.S. or U.K. involvement. Since the Russians have the alleged gunmen in custody, they should be able to produce such evidence if it exists,” Cancian said. “Evidence of Ukrainian involvement consists of disputed allegations that the gunman were headed to Ukraine.”

The U.S. government has denied the Russian government's claims. A State Department spokesperson told Check Your Fact in an March 26 email that ISIS was responsible.

“ISIS bears sole responsibility for this attack. As we said in a statement on Saturday, we strongly condemn ISIS's deadly terrorist attack in Moscow,” the spokesperson said.

A Pentagon spokesperson also said that the claim “was false” in a March 26 email to Check Your Fact.

Max Miller, the State Department's chief spokesman, also [*denied*](https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-march-25-2024/) that Ukraine was involved in the attack during a March 25 press briefing.

“With respect to the first question, there was no Ukrainian involvement - period.  You've seen the Ukrainian Government make that clear?  And of course, with respect to these statements the Russians have offered zero evidence, because there is no evidence of Ukrainian involvement,” Miller said.

Putin claimed that the terrorists who attacked the concert hall tried to escape to the Ukrainian border through a “window” provided to them in advance, according to [*The Associated Press*](https://apnews.com/article/russia-shooting-putin-ukraine-concert-hall-a8471a0aca2985292faea52994aa4f6b). Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said that the terrorists tried to escape to Belarus first but were unable to because of border checkpoints, AFP [*reported*](https://www.barrons.com/news/lukashenko-says-moscow-attackers-tried-fleeing-to-belarus-first-7dd46bf5).

“That's why there was no way they could enter Belarus. They saw that. That's why they turned away and went to the section of the Ukrainian-Russian border,” Lukashenko said, per AFP.

British Foreign Secretary David Cameron also pushed back on the [*claim*](https://twitter.com/David_Cameron/status/1772686040379097427) in a March 26 tweet.[***(RELATED: Image Misidentifies Moscow Terrorist Attack Suspect)***](https://checkyourfact.com/2024/03/27/fact-check-image-moscow-terrorist-suspect/)

Russia's claims about the West and Ukraine on the Crocus City Hall attack are utter nonsense.

We support US statements which make clear that Daesh bears sole responsibility for this attack.

- David Cameron (@David\_Cameron) [*March 26, 2024*](https://twitter.com/David_Cameron/status/1772686040379097427?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

“Russia's claims about the West and Ukraine on the Crocus City Hall attack are utter nonsense. We support U.S. statements which make clear that Daesh bears sole responsibility for this attack,” Cameron said in the tweet.

Russia's investigative committee said it claimed to prove the connection between Ukraine and the Moscow terrorists, according to [*TASS*](https://twitter.com/Faytuks/status/1773366282785562829). The Moscow Times [*reported*](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/04/01/moscow-says-investigating-ukrainian-us-links-to-terrorism-against-russia-a84702) that the committee was investigating the alleged involvement of Ukraine, U.S. and the West in terrorist attacks against Russia, of which there is no evidence.

Reuters [*reported*](https://www.reuters.com/world/iran-alerted-russia-security-threat-before-moscow-attack-sources-say-2024-04-01/) that Iran warned Russia of a major terrorist threat in March, citing three anonymous sources. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, “I do not not know anything about this” to Reuters in response to this reporting.

“Days before the attack in Russia, Tehran shared information with Moscow about a possible big terrorist attack inside Russia that was acquired during interrogations of those arrested in connection with deadly bombings in Iran,” one source told Reuters.

Kyrylo Budanov, Ukraine's head of military intelligence, said that Russia was aware of preparations for a terrorist attack since February 15, according to the [*Kyiv Independent*](https://kyivindependent.com/budanov-russia-knew-about-terror-attack-preparations-at-least-since-feb-15/). Budanov also said that Russian claims to blame Ukraine for the attack were “nonsense.”

Check Your Fact reached out to the Ukrainian and Russian embassies in Washington D.C. for comment and will update this article if responses are provided.

Anna Mock contributed to this report.

Editor's note: This verdict and fact-check are based on available information. The verdict may change.

**Graphic**

An Iraqi member of the Hashed al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilisation units) carries an upsidedown Islamic State (IS) group flag in the city of al-Qaim, in Iraq's western Anbar province near the Syrian border as they fight against remnant pockets of Islamic State group jihadists on November 3, 2017. / AFP PHOTO / AHMAD AL-RUBAYE (Photo credit should read AHMAD AL-RUBAYE/AFP via Getty Images)

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