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Spy Suspect Busted With His Mother

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An officer of an army unit stationed in the Southern Federal District has been arrested on charges of spying for Georgia together with his mother, the Federal Security Service said Friday, Interfax reported.

Senior Lieutenant David Aliyev is charged with collecting classified information about the district's military units, while his mother, Irina Aliyeva, supposedly intended to transfer the data abroad.

The Aliyevs face up to 20 years in prison if convicted of treason.

Georgia's Interior Ministry declined to comment on the report, Interfax said.

A series of spy arrests has followed a short war between Russia and Georgia over South Ossetia that led to a severing of diplomatic ties in 2008. Georgia arrested four alleged Russian spies in November and another six in December. The December arrests provoked an angry outcry by Russia's Foreign Ministry, which called them a smear campaign ahead of a new round of United Nations-mediated talks between Moscow and Tbilisi.

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