

Poland Closes Zakayev Case

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A Warsaw court ruled on Thursday to close a case into the possible extradition of Chechen separatist envoy Akhmed Zakayev to Russia, Interfax reported.

Zakayev, a former rebel foreign minister living in asylum in Britain, was arrested in Poland on Sept. 17 at Russia's request. He is wanted in Russia on terrorism charges.

Zakayev was released by a Warsaw district court the same day and returned to London.

In December, a district court ruled against extraditing Zakayev, saying it could not be done because he was not in Poland.

That decision was appealed by Zakayev's lawyers, who demanded that Polish authorities acknowledge that their client could not be extradited to Russia at all, not just because he was in the country.

The appeals court on Thursday did not back that request, ruling instead to simply close the case.

On Tuesday, the Polish Foreign Ministry denied an entry visa to Zakayev, who said he wished to attend Thursday's hearing.

Russian officials did not react immediately to the ruling.

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