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Novosibirsk Man Asks Prosecutor to Check Legality of Depardieu's Grozny Apartment

By The Moscow Times

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A Novosibirsk resident has submitted a complaint to the Prosecutor General requesting a check into the lawfulness of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov giving French actor Gerard Depardieu an apartment in Grozny.

According to the complainant, Rostislav Antonov, in accordance with Article 49 of the Housing Code, housing is provided by the state or municipal property fund only for citizens who are recognized as low-income by Article 51 of the Housing Code, Interfax reported Wednesday.

Antonov notes that Depardieu's material status is quite far from "low-income," and that Depardieu likely has no need for housing provided by the state.

"As it follows, then, the behavior of Grozny's administration contradicts the budget

legislation of the Russian Federation," Antonov wrote on his social networking page.

Kadyrov announced the news of his gift to Depardeiu on his Instagram account on Feb. 24.

"I just handed Gerard Depardieu the documents to a five-room apartment and a certificate making him an honorary citizen of Chechnya," he wrote, next to a photo of him hugging the actor.

Alvi Karimova, a spokeswoman for Kadyrov, responded to the complaint on Wednesday, saying that the move was fully legal because the apartment was not "municipal property."

The "Grozny-City" apartment complex where Depardieu's new apartment is located was built using non-budgetary funds, she said.

The Prosecutor General's office has not yet commented on Antonov's complaint.

Antonov has asked the Prosecutor General to check the legality of Depardieu's gift, and if a violation is uncovered, to hold those responsible criminally liable.

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