

Uzbek Mobile Operators Accused of Collusion

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Federal Anti-Monopoly Service has opened a case against mobile phone operators Rubicon Wireless Communication and Uzmobility, accusing them of violating anti-trust legislation and forming a cartel.

The anti-monopoly watchdog said the two Uzbekistan-registered operators had colluded to push their main competitor, Uzdunrobit, which is a subsidiary of MTS, out of the market, Interfax reported.

Current anti-trust legislation allows the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service to make judgements in cases when anti-competition practices abroad affect the domestic market.

The cutoff of Uzdunrobit's operations caused a reduction in international roaming calls between Russia and Uzbekistan and harmed the interests of the leading Russian mobile operator, the watchdog said.

Uzbek authorities revoked Uzdunrobit's license in summer 2012, while a Tashkent court declared the company bankrupt under the weight of claims leveled against the company by various agencies totaling over \$1 billion.

Mobile TeleSystems says the accusations leveled against its subsidiary are unfounded and vows to use international legal avenues to recover the damages resulting from the Uzbek authorities' actions.

On Nov. 15 2012 the company filed a suit against Uzbekistan at the International Center for Settling Investment Disputes under the auspices of the World Bank.

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