

Investigators Say Kasparov of No Interest to Them

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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World chess-champion and opposition leader Garry Kasparov, who this week announced that he would be staying out of Russia for the time being amid fears of persecution, is not a person of interest for law enforcement, the Investigative Committee said.

"I'm afraid I have to gladden Mr. Kasparov, or perhaps disappoint him. He has never been summoned by the Investigative Committee for any reason and is of absolutely no interest to investigators," Vladimir Markin, the committee's spokesman, told Interfax.

"On one occasion in 2012, Kasparov gave an explanation to investigators after a policeman filed a statement alleging that Kasparov had bitten his finger. After looking into the matter, no legal action was taken," Markin said late Thursday. "But there is no hiding the fact. I'd like to warn our colleagues who are overseas with Mr. Kasparov to be careful: He bites."

Kasparov told a press conference in Geneva on Wednesday that he would not return to Russia

for fear of being punished for his political activities. "Right now, I have serious doubts that I would be able to travel out again if I returned to Moscow," he said.

Kasparov, 50, co-founded opposition movements The Other Russia in 2006 and Solidarity in 2008, though he has since left both. He has frequently traveled overseas, lobbying for the interests of the Russian opposition and providing financing, as well as working on various international chess-related projects. In 2009, he bought an apartment in New York City.

Kasparov's announcement followed the flight from Russia of liberal economist Sergei Guriev a few weeks ago. Guriev blamed pressure from the Investigative Committee for his decision not to return to Russia.

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