

Property Disputes Possible Motive in Abkhazia Diplomat Murder

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A property dispute may be the reason behind the shooting death of a 36-year-old Russian diplomat in Abkhazia on Monday.

Dmitry Vishernev, a secretary at the embassy in the Abkhaz capital, Sukhumi, worked to resolve property disputes between Russians and Georgians who were expelled from Abkhazia following its breakaway from Georgia in 2008.

He had been threatened multiple times in connection to his role, Kommersant reported Tuesday. Burglars had also previously broken into his house and stolen documents as well as valuables.

Vishernev was shot in the head at close range by an unknown assailant while driving to work around 8:30 a.m. Monday. His wife, Olga, who also works at the embassy, was sitting next to him in the car and was seriously injured. She remained in critical condition Tuesday following

an operation at a local hospital.

A fake bomb was found at the scene of the shooting, prompting speculation that it had been used by the attacker to stop the Vishernevs' government car.

An Abkhaz official has described the attack, which took place on the fifth anniversary of Russia and Abkhazia establishing diplomatic relations, as an act of terror.

Investigators were also looking into other possible motives in the killing, including disputes within the diplomat's extended family.

Abkhaz leader Alexander Ankvab said he would personally oversee the investigation, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported. Russia's Investigative Committee has sent members of its North Caucasus Federal District office to Abkhazia to aid the investigation.

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