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FSB Opens 'Smuggling' Inquiry Into Prominent Putin Critic

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An archive photo of former deputy prime minister Alfred Kokh.

The Federal Security Service, or FSB, opened a "smuggling" investigation into 1990s deputy prime minister and current Kremlin critic Alfred Kokh "as soon as" he left on a trip to Germany, he said.

On Tuesday, he wrote in a Facebook post that 15 masked officers searched his home at 7 a.m. after pointing a machine gun in the face of his "tired, old wife." He laughed off the charge and said "thankfully it's not pedophilia."

Kokh, an architect of the 1990s privatization reform, believes that the accusation and search are retaliation for his adamant criticism of the regime of President Vladimir Putin.

Another former deputy prime minister turned Kremlin critic, Boris Nemtsov, agreed with Kokh, saying in his own Facebook post that he "has no doubt that the criminal case against Kokh is connected with his writings."

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