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FSB: Graft Cost Russia's Military Complex $75 Million in 2014

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A representative of the Federal Security Service on Tuesday said corruption dealt a massive blow to the state defense budget in 2014, accounting for losses of more than 5 billion rubles ($75 million).

"Within the military-industrial complex — at enterprises with state participation — large-scale embezzlement has been uncovered, which is hindering the effectiveness of meeting state defense orders," Dmitry Ryabov, a representative for the FSB's economic security directorate, said at a meeting on corruption Tuesday, news agency RIA Novosti reported.

In 2014 alone, more than 80 criminal cases involving corruption in the military-industrial complex and the defense industry were uncovered, he said.

Russia has sought to crack down on rampant corruption in recent years, introducing fines for officials who take bribes and requiring all state employees to submit income declarations for themselves and their family members.

Ryabov's comments come a day after high-ranking government officials vociferously objected to an initiative launched by anti-corruption campaigner Alexei Navalny.

The initiative pushed for Moscow's ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, which would make "illegal enrichment" by officials a criminal offense in Russia.

The campaign received a frigid welcome by some government officials, but was promptly dismissed by representatives of the Interior Ministry, the Justice Ministry and the Kremlin.

Mikhail Fedotov, the head of the Kremlin's human rights council, even warned that such an anti-corruption drive could lead to a renewal of Stalinist repressions, the Interfax news agency reported.

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