

Russia Accuses Turkey of Importing Islamic State Oil

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Defense ministry officials sit under screens with satellite images on display during a briefing in Moscow, Russia, Dec. 2, 2015.

The Russian Defense Ministry has accused Ankara of importing oil smuggled out of Islamic State-controlled territories in Iraq and Syria, claiming that Turkish President Recep Erdogan and his family were personally involved in the trade, Russian media reported Wednesday.

“Turkey is the main buyer of oil stolen by IS. Top-level state leadership — President Erdogan and his family — is involved in this criminal business,” Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov said during a press briefing, the news website Gazeta.ru reported.

Other ministry employees added that Antonov's claim was backed by satellite images, the report went on to say.

The pro-Kremlin RT news portal cited Antonov saying that Russia was aware of “three main

oil smuggling routes” to Turkey.

The allegations were echoed by General Staff Lieutenant-General, Sergei Rudskoi, who said during the same press briefing that three smuggling routes had been discovered, the Vedomosti newspaper wrote Wednesday.

On Monday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Moscow had received information suggesting that oil from IS territories was being brought into Turkey by truck convoys, in amounts that hinted at industrial use, RIA Novosti reported.

Putin claimed that he “had reason to believe” that Turkish forces shot down a Russian Su-24 jet on Nov. 24 in order to protect the country's trade with IS, RT said Monday in a separate report.

Erdogan challenged his Russian counterpart to either prove the allegations or resign from his post, the Russia's TASS news agency reported Monday.

“If the [allegations] are proven, I will not stay in office,” he was quoted as saying on the sidelines of the UN climate summit in Paris. “So I ask our honorable Putin, would he stay?”

The Islamic State is banned in Russia as a terrorist organization.

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