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U.S. Official Accuses Putin of Corruption

By The Moscow Times

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Adam Szubin, the Acting Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence at the U.S. Treasury accused President Vladimir Putin of corruption in an interview with the BBC on Monday.

“Putin is corrupt and the U.S. government has known this for many, many years,” Szubin told the BBC Panorama program.

“We've seen him enriching his friends, his close allies, and marginalizing those using state assets that he doesn't view as friends. Whether that's Russia's energy wealth or other state contracts, he directs them to people he believes will serve him and excludes those who don't. To me, that is a picture of corruption,” the U.S. Treasury official was quoted by the BBC as saying.

This is the first time US officials have directly accused Putin of corruption, the BBC noted.

In 2014, the U.S. imposed sanctions on a number of Putin's allies and claimed the Russian

president had secret investments in the energy sector, but didn't make any direct accusations of corruption.

The Kremlin dismissed the accusations. “None of these questions or issues need to be answered, as they are pure fiction,” Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said when the BBC asked him to comment on the accusations.

On Tuesday, Peskov called the U.S. Treasury's statement an official accusation that demands proof, because “the voicing of such accusations by such agencies as the U.S. Treasury without actual evidence casts a shadow on this very agency,” the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

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