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Tokyo Protests Russian Detention of Japanese Citizen on Disputed Kuril Islands

By The Moscow Times

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Russian authorities has detained a Japanese citizen on the Kuril Islands, a disputed territory which has strained relations between Moscow and Tokyo for decades.

A translator for a Japanese group was detained by Russian authorities on his way back to Japan's Nemuro port on Aug. 21. Local media have reported that he was carrying $40,000, which was undeclared.

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga expressed "regret" over the incident and said authorities are "working to have the man return to the city of Nemuro."

The incident comes shortly before a planned meeting between Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Vladivostok next month.

Russia and Japan never signed a peace treaty after World War II. The islands were captured by Soviet troops during the war and have been under Russian control ever since.

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