

Former Russian Diplomat Says Embassy Staff Are 'Almost Defenseless'

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A policeman walks past the Turkish Embassy with broken window panes in Moscow, Russia, Nov. 25, 2015. **Ivan Sekretarev / AP**

A former Russian diplomat has claimed that Kremlin officials abroad are often left almost defenseless outside the confines of their embassies, [the RIA Novosti news agency reported Tuesday](#).

Alexander Panov, former Russian ambassador to Norway, Japan and South Korea, spoke out about diplomats' safety abroad following the assassination of the Russian ambassador to Turkey, Andrei Karlov.

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Panov said that diplomats often had no protection at all when traveling around their host cities or countries.

"Generally, the host country ensures that diplomatic missions and personnel are protected,"

Panov said. "The outer perimeter of the embassy is usually protected with the help of local police and security services. But when I went into the city or have some trips around the country, I did not have any protection," Panov said.

The former ambassador said that Russia's Foreign Ministry was only able to ask the host nation for extra police protection in "exceptional circumstances," such as in Afghanistan.

"Private security guards don't have the right to carry weapons in the host country, so that is no solution anyway," Panov said.

Russia's ambassador to Turkey, Andrei Karlov, was killed in Ankara on Monday evening. Karlov was attending a photo exhibition called "Russia Through the Eyes of the Turks" when he was shot from behind by a 22-year-old ex-policeman Mevlut Mert Altintas.

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