

Prominent Economist Aleksashenko Says He Won't Return to Russia After 'Fake' Detention

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Sergei Aleksashenko **Mikhail Metsel / TASS**

Former deputy finance minister Sergei Aleksashenko has said he will not return to Russia, after being spooked by fake reports of his detention.

Russian tabloid Moskovsky Komsomolets reported last week that Aleksashenko, a former deputy finance minister and first deputy chairman of the Russian Central Bank, had been detained at Moscow's Domodedovo Airport for trying to smuggle Soviet military medals out of the country.

At the time, Aleksashenko denied the reports, [writing](#) on Twitter that he was not in Russia.

But [speaking](#) to the liberal Ekho Moskvyy radio on Tuesday he said “there is no smoke without fire.”

“You know, if there’s a weapon on the stage, then it is guaranteed to be fired in the third act,” he said, referencing Russian playwright Anton Chekhov.

“If in relation to me the word combination ‘criminal investigation’ is being used, then clearly someone is considering it.”

“It’s better for me to avoid this danger that I can foresee.”

Asked how long he would stay away from Russia, he said he did not know.

“Until I’m not convinced that a trip to Russia does not put me in danger, I will not travel [to Russia,]” he said.

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