

Former Russian Ruling Party Official Found Dead in Apparent Suicide

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Yury Kotler (Maxim Shemetov / TASS)

A former official from Russia's ruling party and top state executive has been found dead inside his apartment in what appears to be a suicide.

Yury Kotler, 50, a former state-run RIA Novosti, Time magazine and The New York Times journalist, served on the United Russia party's supreme council in 2012-2016 and on its expert council since February 2018. He was a senior manager at several state-owned companies, including VTB bank and Russia's largest port operator Novorossiisk Commercial Sea Port (NCSP).

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"A note was found at the scene of the incident, making it clear that he committed suicide for personal reasons," the RBC business portal [cited](#) an unnamed Moscow police officer as saying

Wednesday.

Investigators [noted](#) that no signs of violence were uncovered in the apartment where Kotler was found with a gunshot wound to the head.

Court records indicate that Kotler was [declared](#) bankrupt a week before his death for failing to repay a loan of almost \$1 million to VTB, where he had served as a senior vice president until 2015.

A month before his death, Kotler [sued](#) the NCSP port operator for what the Moscow court said were unpaid wages, arrears that a United Russia colleague [described](#) as Kotler's "exit parachute," RBC reported.

Kotler was dismissed as NCSP's deputy director in January 2018 for allegedly regularly skipping work, RBC cited a spokesman for Transneft, a Russian oil pipeline monopoly that co-owns the port operator with its rival Summa Group, as saying.

Summa co-owner Ziyavudin Magomedov was arrested in March on charges of embezzling more than \$35 million.

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