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Top Russian Official Pledges Support for Family of Slain Journalist, Arkady Babchenko

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Valentina Matviyenko / Kremlin.ru

Editor's note: Since the publication of this article, Arkady Babchenko has appeared at a press conference in Kiev where he said his murder was staged as part of a sting operation to prevent an actual attempt on his life. Read more.

Russia's senior-most lawmaker has pledged support for the family of journalist Arkady Babchenko, who was killed in the Ukrainian capital of Kiev on Tuesday night.

Babchenko, a 41-year-old veteran of two Chechen wars and a prominent correspondent who covered regional conflicts, died in an ambulance after being shot in his apartment late on Tuesday. He left Russia last year after receiving death threats and being denounced by pro-Kremlin politicians over his criticism of the Syrian and Ukrainian wars.

Related article: Russia, Ukraine React to Death of Slain Journalist Arkady Babchenko

“Whatever political views he adhered to, he had fought for Russia,” the state-run RIA Novosti news agency quoted Russian upper house speaker Valentina Matviyenko as saying Wednesday.

“He left six underage children and of course Russia will help and support his family,” she said.

Russia and Ukraine have launched two separate investigations into Babchenko’s murder, with the Ukrainian police naming his profession and civic stance as their two leading theories.

In response to allegations that Moscow may have been the murder, Matviyenko said “Russia had no motivation” to kill the journalist, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

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