

Russian Senator Stripped of Mandate Amid Murder Investigations

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Rauf Arashukov **Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency**

Russian senators have unanimously voted to unseat their colleague who faces life in prison on aggravated murder charges months after his dramatic arrest in the Federation Council's chambers.

Rauf Arashukov, 32, was arrested during a session of the upper house of parliament after attempting to flee the chamber on Jan. 30. Arashukov, who represented the southern Russian republic of Karachayevo-Cherkessia, has not admitted his guilt and calls the investigation politically motivated.

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The Federation Council [voted](#) 153-0 on Wednesday to strip Arashukov of his mandate.

The official reason given for Arashukov's removal was his failure to submit his income

declaration by the April 30 deadline, Interfax [cited](#) deputy speaker Yury Vorobyov as saying earlier.

Arashukov has been charged with the murder of Circassian activist Aslan Zhukov, who was shot dead in March 2010 in the regional capital of Cherkessk, as well as the May 2010 murder of Circassian politician Fral Shebzukhov, investigators revealed in January.

A Moscow court temporarily [suspended](#) Arashukov from his duties in March.

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