

Russian Firm Sues Over French Far-Right Leader's \$11M Loan

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The company seeking the loan's return reportedly has links to Russian intelligence services. **European Union 2016 - European Parliament (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)**

An obscure Russian company is suing the French far-right leader's political party to recover an \$11 million loan, the investigative website Open Media [reported](#) Monday, citing court documents.

Marine Le Pen's party took out 9.4 million euros (\$10.8 million at the time) from the Moscow-based First Czech-Russian Bank in 2014. Two years later, the bank lost its license and the loan was [sold](#) to a little-known Russian company called Konti.

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Konti, which Open Media says is a Moscow-based car rental agency, transferred the right to claim the loan to another Russian company, Aviazapchast. Aviazapchast reportedly sells Russian aircraft navigation equipment and spare parts in Asia and Africa, as well as special

metals for India's and Syria's aerospace and aviation industries.

Aviazapchast has [filed](#) an arbitration complaint against Le Pen's National Rally party with a Russian court in December 2019.

The first hearing in the case to recover the \$11-million loan from Le Pen's party is scheduled for June 2, 2020.

The German Marshall Fund [reported](#) in 2018 that Aviazapchast, including its sole shareholder Valery Zakharenkov, has links to Russian intelligence services. The U.S.-based nonprofit said at the time that the loan's value was roughly equal to that of Aviazapchast's pre-tax profit in 2016.

“This may indicate that this action could have come at the behest of state actors or the originally arranging network,” the German Marshall Fund said.

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