

Foreign Adversaries Could Use Tundra Oil Spill to Discredit Russia, Security Chief Warns

By [The Barents Observer](#)

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On May 29, a fuel tank leak near the city of Norilsk spilled more than 21,000 metric tons of diesel fuel into the ground and adjacent rivers. **Emergency Situations Ministry**

A massive fuel spill in Russia's Arctic could play into the hands of foreign foes that want to discredit Russia and its Arctic policy, Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev has [said](#).

Patrushev's comments follow a May 29 fuel tank leak near the city of Norilsk which spilled more than 21,000 metric tons of diesel fuel into the ground and nearby rivers. The environmental catastrophe happened after the concrete foundation on which the fuel reservoir rests began to sink, which officials linked to melting permafrost caused by climate change.

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“The accident [...] shows that underestimating the threats posed by climate change leads to serious ecological consequences and material costs and could also play into the hands of those who seek to discredit Russia’s policy in the Arctic,” Interfax cited Patrushev as saying at a Security Council meeting Tuesday.

He also stressed the importance of enhancing security at fuel and energy facilities in the Arctic and called on regional leaders to update their emergency response plans to prevent future accidents.

Patrushev has long been a key figure in President Vladimir Putin’s Russia. He has held several top posts in the Federal Security Service (FSB) and has been Security Council Secretary since 2008.

He [elaborated](#) on his positions in an interview with the *Argumenty i Fakty* newspaper Wednesday, arguing that Western countries, particularly the United States and NATO, are actively seeking to destabilize Russia’s public and political situation.

He added that foreign government-controlled media is being used to “discredit Russia’s leadership, government institutions and patriotic political leaders, as well as to erode Russian spiritual and moral values.”

The Arctic has in recent years become a top political priority of the Kremlin and several highly ambitious policies which aim to boost natural resource extraction, shipping and military development in the region have been adopted.

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