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Ukraine Sanctions Tycoon Linked to Russian Defense Firms

By AFP

June 18, 2021



Firtash, one of Ukraine's richest men and a one-time ally of ousted president Viktor Yanukovych, is wanted for bribery and racketeering charges in the United States. **AP / TASS**

Ukraine on Friday imposed sanctions on controversial tycoon Dmytro Firtash for selling titanium products to Russian military enterprises, the presidency said in a statement.

The ex-Soviet country has been fighting pro-Russia separatists in its eastern Donetsk and Lugansk regions since 2014, following Moscow's annexation of the Crimean peninsula.

Kiev accuses Moscow of sending troops and arms to fuel the conflict, referring to the separatists and those who support them as terrorists.

In a statement on its website, the Ukrainian presidency said it had imposed "a full package of sanctions" on Firtash, though it did not provide specifics.

"According to the state security service and intelligence, the businessman's titanium

companies supplied raw materials for military enterprises in the Russian Federation," the statement said.

Firtash, one of Ukraine's richest men and a one-time ally of ousted president Viktor Yanukovych, is wanted for bribery and racketeering charges in the United States.

He was detained in Austria in March 2014 over the U.S. allegations and the country's supreme court ruled in 2019 that he could be extradited.

But Firtash remains in Austria, where he is appealing the extradition and can remain until a ruling is made.

If extradited, the Ukrainian tycoon, who denies all charges and says he was the victim of a smear campaign, faces years in prison.

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