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Ex French PM Fillon Joins Russian Company Board

By AFP

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Francois Fillon. **Zuma / TASS**

Former French Prime Minister Francois Fillon has joined the board of Russian petrochemicals giant Sibur, the company said on Thursday.

Sibur published an updated list of its board of directors showing Fillon was appointed to the board as an independent director.

The company is controlled by Leonid Mikhelson, one of Russia's richest men, and Gennady Timchenko, a close associate of President Vladimir Putin, among other shareholders.

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The move comes after earlier this year the former French prime minister was named to the board of Russian state oil company Zarubezhneft.

Fillon, who ran the French government under President Nicolas Sarkozy between 2007 and 2012, is head of Apteras, a consultancy he set up after an ignominious 2017 presidential bid.

His campaign was capsized by a fake-jobs scandal, for which a court sentenced him in June 2020 to five years in prison, three suspended.

A number of former senior European politicians have joined Russian energy companies in the past.

Austrian ex-foreign minister Karin Kneissl, who notoriously danced with Putin at her wedding in 2018, was in June named to the board of Rosneft, Russia's biggest oil producer.

Former German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has been chairman of the Rosneft board since 2017, earning $600,000 a year.

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