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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ex-Russian Lawmaker Gudkov Says Deported From Georgia

January 31, 2022



Dmitry Gudkov fled Russia in 2021 after he was detained in what he calls a "fake" criminal case against him. **Gavriil Grigorov / TASS**

Former Russian lawmaker Dmitry Gudkov said Monday he was barred from entering Georgia, becoming the latest Kremlin critic to be deported from the Caucasus republic that had become a haven for Russia's embattled opposition over the past year.

In a video filmed inside an empty airport terminal, Gudkov said he had arrived in Tbilisi on an invitation to meet local activists but was told at the border that he was barred from entry.

Embed:

> Прилетел из Киева в Тбилиси. На государственном уровне принято решение меня депортировать обратно в Киев. Решение политическое. О моем визите всех предупредили, я приехал по официальному

> приглашению. Были запланированы встречи с активистами и дипломатами. pic.twitter.com/weyehCgJpl
>
> — Дмитрий Гудков (@gudkovd) January 31, 2022

“I was told that I would be deported back to Kyiv,” Gudkov said, calling the decision “political” on Twitter.

Gudkov, 42, left Russia for Ukraine in 2021 after being detained then suddenly released under what he called a “fake” criminal case against him.

He faced up to five years in prison over unpaid rent from 2015 when he was detained last June, months ahead of Russia’s parliamentary elections in which he had been planning to run.

On Friday, the exiled opposition figure said he had received an email informing him that he was barred from leaving Russia.

Related article: As Crackdown Intensifies, Russian Emigres Find Refuge in Georgia

Gudkov said in Monday’s video he was not the first Russian opposition figure to be deported from ex-Georgia, naming jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny’s former key aide Lyubov Sobol as another deportee.

Sobol, who was banned from running for Moscow’s legislative assembly in 2019 and the Russian parliament in 2021, said she was barred from entering Georgia in August.

“As I see it, this is simply because the government and the country’s leadership don’t want to spoil relations with” Russian President Vladimir Putin, Sobol said at the time.

Georgia became a destination of choice alongside the Baltic states for key Navalny allies as they faced a widening crackdown on dissenting voices over the past year.

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