

U.S. Charges Russian Banker Kostin With Sanctions Evasion, Money Laundering

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VTB Bank President Andrei Kostin. **Pelagia Tikhonova / Moskva News Agency**

The United States on Thursday [charged](#) Russian banking tycoon Andrei Kostin and two U.S.-based associates for violating sanctions by paying for the maintenance of his luxury property.

Kostin, chairman of Russia's second-largest state-owned bank VTB, was accused of participating in a scheme to evade sanctions and launder funds to support his two superyachts, the Justice Department said.

The banker, who has been under U.S. sanctions since 2018, was also accused of being involved in a separate scheme to evade sanctions related to a luxury home in Aspen, Colorado, that he purchased in 2010 for \$13.5 million.

Two U.S. nationals, Vadim Wolfson and Gannon Bond, were arrested on Thursday and accused of aiding Kostin, 67, who is believed to be in Russia.

All three face up to 20 years in prison if found guilty of conspiracy to violate sanctions.

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The indictment is part of five charges the U.S. brought against "Russian criminals who finance and enable Russia's war" to mark the upcoming second anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine.

The Justice Department also unveiled an indictment against Vladislav Osipov, who is believed to live in Switzerland, and offered a \$1 million reward for his arrest.

Osipov, who was indicted previously in November 2022 for violating U.S. sanctions, was charged with five new counts of bank fraud in connection with the operation of a luxury superyacht owned by sanctioned Russian oligarch Viktor Vekselberg.

The yacht was seized at the request of the U.S. government following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The Justice Department also announced the indictment of Sergei Kurchenko, a pro-Kremlin Ukrainian oligarch who is also currently believed to be living in Russia.

Kurchenko, who has been under U.S. sanctions since 2015 for allegedly misappropriating Ukrainian state assets, was accused of money laundering and using shell companies to sell metal products worth more than \$330 million in the United States.

U.S. Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco said the sanctions enforcement has resulted in the "restraint, seizure, and forfeiture of nearly \$700 million in assets" and the arrests of more than 70 individuals for violating sanctions and export controls.

AFP contributed reporting.

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