

Minsk Says Interpol Confirms Kerimov on Wanted List

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Interpol put Uralkali owner Suleiman Kerimov on its international wanted list within 24 hours of being asked by Minsk, Belarussian Interior Ministry spokesman Konstantin Shalkevich said Tuesday, Interfax West reported.

"Yesterday we sent the request and yesterday we got the confirmation from Interpol that Kerimov was put in the international database of persons wanted by Interpol," Shalkevich said.

On Monday the Belarus Investigative Committee said that Kerimov is being charged under the ongoing criminal investigation relating to executives of Beloruskali, the potash joint venture that fell apart when the Russian side withdrew. Kerimov is facing charges similar to that of the chief executive of Uralkali, Vladislav Baumgertner, who has been held in Minsk for a week— abuse of power and official position. Belarus maintains it has lost millions of dollars due to Uralkali's withdrawal from the partnership. A conviction could bring

a sentence of up to 10 years in prison.

Meanwhile, attorney Anatoly Kucherena, who is also the lawyer for Edward Snowden, said his client Kerimov will refrain from travelling abroad.

"Interpol does not clarify the legitimacy or substance of the accusations against people put on the wanted list," Kucherena said. "They are obligated to fulfill the requests of investigative bodies of member countries of the international police organization.

Kucherena also called the situation "absurd" and said he doesn't know how to organize a defense. "From whom should I defend? Should I work through the press service of the Investigative Committee of Belarus?" he added.

While Russia has consistently provided subsidized exports and cheap loans to Belarus, ruled by strongman leader Alexander Lukashenko, the two countries have a long history of quarreling over economic questions. Lukashenko said last year that unspecified "Russian oligarchs" had offered him a \$5 billion bribe to sell Belaruskali, RIA Novosti reported.

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