

# Russian Oligarchs Attend Closed-Doors Meeting at The Atlantic Council in D.C.

May 24, 2018



**Pyotr Aven, Mikhail Fridman / MT**

Two Russian billionaires have held a controversial meeting at the Atlantic Council think-tank in Washington D.C. behind closed doors in what critics said were “friendly” talks with “oligarchic emissaries.”

Alfa Bank co-founders Mikhail Fridman and Pyotr Aven [featured](#) as guests at the off-the-record roundtable on Monday. Russian dissidents including former chess champion Garry Kasparov criticized the think-tank for not opening the talks to the public.

**Related article:** [Oligarch in 'Trump Dossier' Named Russian Businessman of 2017](#)

At the discussion, the two businessmen said they expected Russia’s economy to continue to decline despite rising oil prices, the Ekho Moskvyy radio station [reported](#) Thursday, citing unnamed sources familiar with the talks.

“The reasons for this are irreversible structural changes, a brain drain and Vladimir Putin’s extreme short-sightedness,” Ekho Moskvyy wrote.

When asked about the meeting, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that neither Fridman nor Aven could be called “Putin’s emissaries,” citing a term used in a letter written by Russian emigres critical of the roundtable, the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#).

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/05/24/russian-oligarchs-attend-closed-doors-meeting-at-atlantic-council-in-dc-a61560>