

Kremlin Slams France's Seizure of Russia-Linked Villa

By [AFP](#)

April 18, 2024



The "Suzanna" villa, known as belonging to President Vladimir Putin's ex-wife and her partner, a Russian businessman, in Anglet, near Biarritz. **Gaizka Iroz / AFP**

The Kremlin on Thursday denounced the seizure in France of a villa allegedly owned by Russian businessman Artur Ocheretny, the new partner of President Vladimir Putin's ex-wife.

The property, in the southwestern coastal town of Anglet, was seized in December 2023 as part of an investigation into money laundering, prosecutors said Wednesday.

"Any encroachment on private property is illegal from the onset," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

"The French authorities are undermining the foundations of their legal system. We have said it many times," he added.

Nicknamed "Suzanna," the palatial art deco home was purchased for 5.4 million euros (\$5.8

million) in 2013, with renovations totaling up to 3.5 million euros, according to French media.

The probe came to light following a complaint by Transparency International, an NGO that exposes and tracks assets it says are linked to "dirty money."

Investigators are looking into whether the funds used to purchase the home were obtained fraudulently, although prosecutors have stressed no one has been formally charged.

Since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022, billions of dollars worth of Russian assets have been frozen or confiscated in Europe due to sanctions.

The Kremlin has reacted furiously to the seizures and European efforts to use them to arm Ukraine, calling such moves an "unprecedented violation" of international law.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/04/18/kremlin-slams-frances-seizure-of-russia-linked-villa-a84889>