

KHRAPUNOV AFFAIR

Swiss dismiss Kazakh money laundering case

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Khrapunov, a former Kazakh minister and mayor of the city of Almaty, fled Kazakhstan with his wife and moved to Geneva in 2008.

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The Office of the Attorney General of Geneva has closed an investigation into suspected money laundering in a case involving Viktor Khrapunov, the former mayor of Kazakhstan's largest city, it was confirmed on Wednesday.

Legal proceedings were initiated in 2012 against Victor Khrapunov and his wife, who have been based in Geneva, for suspected money laundering; Kazakhstan had requested mutual legal assistance.

But on Wednesday, Marc Guéniat, spokesperson for the prosecutor's office, confirmed a report by the German-language newspaper *Tages-Anzeiger* that the case had been dismissed.

“The order to terminate proceedings was notified to the parties on Thursday [November 14],” he said. An appeal is still possible until November 25.

Khrapunov, a former Kazakh minister and mayor of the city of Almaty, fled Kazakhstan with his wife and moved to Geneva in 2008.

He has always denied the money laundering charges. A Kazakh court sentenced him in October 2018 in absentia to 17 years in prison for embezzlement and corruption, which concluded local proceedings against him.

Swiss President Ueli Maurer plans a trip to Kazakhstan on Friday to meet the president and to discuss relations and cooperation. Ahead of his visit, Maurer is due to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow to discuss economic affairs and Switzerland's role as an intermediary between Russia and Georgia.

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