

England to charge Russian in spy's death

by UPI

LONDON - Russian prosecutors said Tuesday the nation's constitution prevents the extradition of a Moscow man accused of poisoning a former Russian spy in London.

Earlier Tuesday, British prosecutors said they would seek the extradition of Andrey Lugovoy to face murder charges in the death of former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko.

"I have today concluded that the evidence sent to us by the police is sufficient to charge Andrey Lugovoy with the murder of Mr. Litvinenko by deliberate poisoning," Director of Public Prosecutions Ken Macdonald said.

A spokeswoman with the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office said Russians cannot be extradited, but they can be tried in Russia.

"In line with article 61 of Russia's constitution, a Russian cannot be handed over to another state," spokeswoman Marina Gridneva said, CNN reported.

"At the same time, in line with the European convention on mutual legal assistance in criminal cases and Russian criminal law, a citizen who has committed a crime on the territory of a foreign country can be held criminally responsible ... but only on Russian territory," Gridneva said.

Litvinenko, an outspoken critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin who had moved to London, died there last November after being poisoned with the radioactive agent polonium 210.

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