

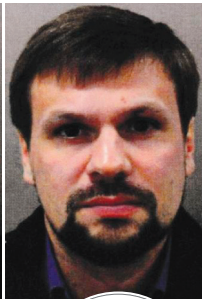
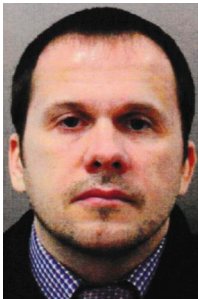
# Alleged Russian link to Czech blast

Russia has expelled 20 Czech diplomats in a retaliatory move, a day after Prague sent home 18 Russian embassy staff suspected of involvement in an explosion at an arms depot in 2014 which killed two people

■ **Apr 17, 2021:** Czech authorities expel 18 Russian diplomats accused of being intelligence operatives and name two men wanted in connection with 2014 Vrbetice depot blast

► Two men identified as **Alexander Petrov** (right) and **Ruslan Boshirov** (far right), apparent cover names for **Alexander Mishkin** and **Anatoly Chepiga** – believed to be officers in Russia's GRU spy agency

■ Both men are also wanted in UK over 2018 Salisbury poisoning of former Russian spy **Sergei Skripal**



**Oct 11, 2014**

Two men arrive in Prague using same cover identities they used in Salisbury



80km  
50 miles



**Oct 13:** Pair move to Ostrava before returning to Moscow on Oct 16 – day of Vrbetice depot blast



▲ Arms stored at Vrbetice may have been destined for use against pro-Russian forces in Ukraine or Syria

■ Men linked to blast through 2014 email to depot owner, claiming to be from Tajikistan national guard and wanting two men to inspect site. Email had scans of passports with pictures matching those of men wanted for Skripal poisoning