

# Serbian Liberals Protest Russian Involvement

October 31, 2011

**The  Moscow Times**

BELGRADE, Serbia — A liberal party in Serbia demanded the expulsion of the Russian ambassador on Sunday after he appeared at a nationalist gathering.

✘Ambassador Alexander Konuzin has been meddling in Serbia's internal politics and should be declared persona non grata, the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina, or LSV, said in a statement.

✘Konuzin on Saturday attended an anniversary meeting of the opposition nationalist Serbian Progressive Party. Serbian media quoted Konuzin as saying the party "has become a true reflection of the popular mood" in the country.

✘The LSV party statement said "the ambassador of the Russian Federation in Serbia has definitely shown ... that the Russian Federation has been meddling in Serbia's internal affairs on an unbearable scale."

✘Serbia's deputy Prime Minister Bozidar Djelic said he was sure that "Russia wouldn't like see

the same behavior of foreign ambassadors" on its turf.

✘Konuzin has clashed in the past with Serbia's liberals, who have accused him of nondiplomatic behavior. ✘He recently stormed out of a security forum in Belgrade, accusing its participants of not doing enough to defend Serbia's claim to the breakaway province of Kosovo, which declared independence in 2008.

✘Serbia's nationalists have advocated stronger ties with Russia and the abolition of the EU bid because of Western support for Kosovo's statehood.

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