

White House Confirms, Downplays CIA Director's Kiev Visit

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WASHINGTON — The White House on Monday warned that Russia would face more "costs" for its interventions in Ukraine and confirmed that the director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, John Brennan, was in Kiev over the weekend.

"We don't normally comment on the CIA director's travel but given the extraordinary circumstances in this case and the false claims being leveled by the Russians at the CIA we can confirm that the director was in Kiev as part of a trip to Europe," White House spokesman Jay Carney told reporters.

According to media reports, Russia has urged Washington to explain what Brennan was doing in Ukraine.

"Senior level visits of intelligence officials are a standard means of fostering mutually beneficial security cooperation including U.S.-Russian intelligence collaboration going back to the beginnings of the post-Cold War era," Carney said.

"U.S. and Russian intelligence officials have met over the years. To imply that U.S. officials meeting with their counterparts is anything other than in the same spirit is absurd," he said.

Carney also said the U.S. government commended the government of Ukraine for its restraint in dealing with provocative actions from Russia.

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