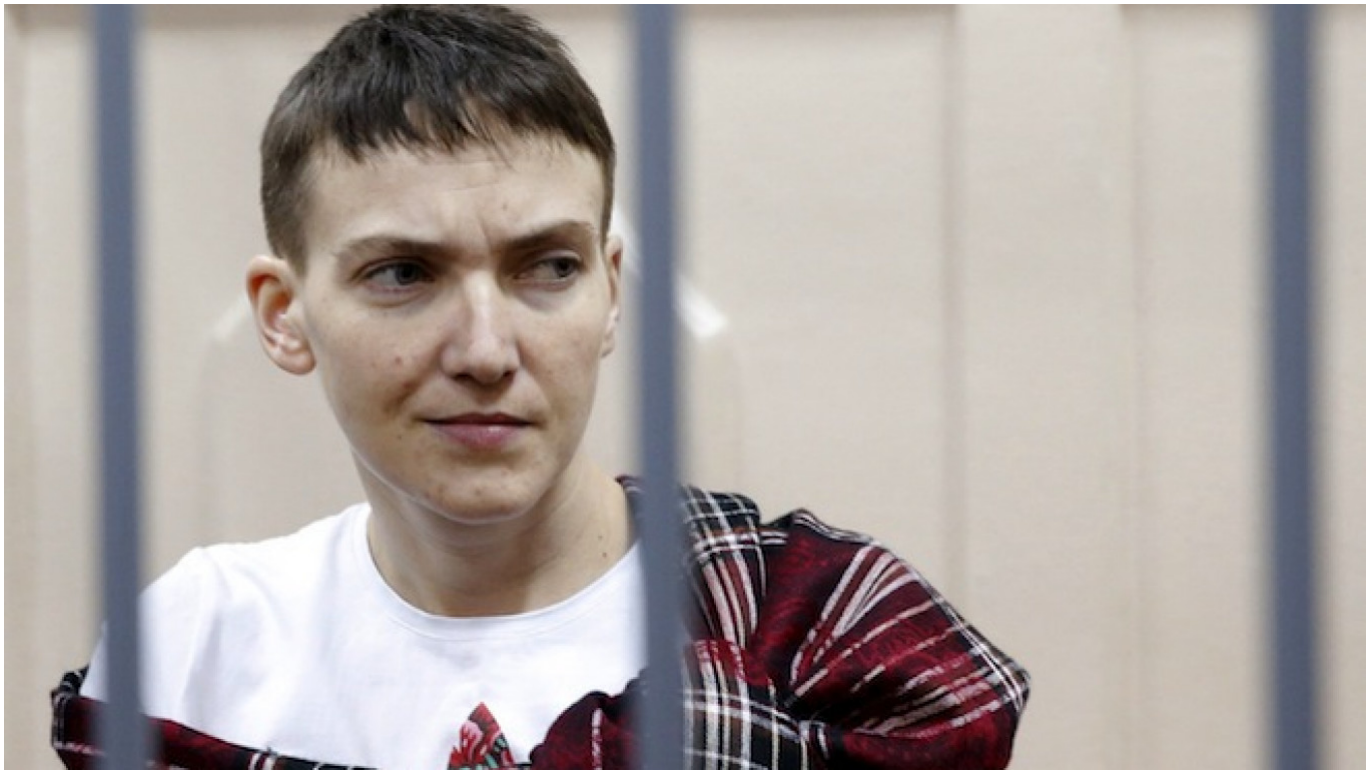
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Savchenko Lawyer Feigin Investigated for 'Extremist' Tweets

By Anna Dolgov

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Ukrainian military pilot Nadezhda Savchenko looks out from a defendants' cage as she attends a hearing at the Basmanny district court in Moscow, March 26, 2015.

A defense lawyer for jailed Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko said Russia's Investigative Committee is looking into his Twitter account for signs of "extremism" after complaints by a pro-Kremlin activist.

Mark Feigin, an avid Twitter user, claimed Wednesday on the social network that the inquiry was also prompted by the prosecution's failure to prove its charges against Savchenko, whom Moscow accuses of abetting the killing of two Russian journalists in eastern Ukraine last summer.

"They held on for 9.5 months. After that it became clear the 'Savchenko case' is crumbling. Can't pull it off without removing Feigin," the lawyer wrote.

Feigin said he received a call earlier Wednesday from an Investigative Committee official asking about his Twitter account. Given the April 1 date of the call and the tweet, he added in another message: “Confirmed, not a joke.”

The “extremism” inquiry appeared to have been prompted by a complaint from lawyer and Kremlin supporter, Ilya Remeslo, who has acknowledged on his own Twitter account that he had written to the Justice Ministry “so they raise the question about disbarring” Feigin over his Twitter messages.

“Things work quickly,” Remeslo added. “I wrote about [Feigin] to the organs just a few days ago.”

In response, Feigin denounced Remeslo as a “snitch.”

The inquiry comes amid the government's increasing efforts to suppress opposition-minded voices on social networks, which have emerged as the main means of galvanizing supporters and communicating with onlookers for Russia's political dissidents and Savchenko's defense team.

But the complaint against Feigin appeared to have been prompted not so much by his comments about the Savchenko case, as by his tweets on politics.

Following the murder of opposition leader Boris Nemtsov in Moscow on Feb. 27, Feigin tweeted about his plans to join a march in honor of the slain politician — and added a few strong words in reference to the authorities.

“Along with the march in memory of Boris Nemtsov, I will lead a column of supporters of freeing Nadezhda Savchenko. You must come. Let's show those hos!” he wrote.

Remeslo, the pro-Kremlin lawyer, posted a screenshot of that tweet and another similar one as evidence of Feigin's “extremism.”
Feigin said via Twitter that “this all has already happened in 2012.” That year, he represented members of the Pussy Riot punk rock band, who were charged with hooliganism for staging a performance against President Vladimir Putin in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior.

During the course of the Pussy Riot appeal, investigators summoned Feigin for questioning about the opposition protests on Moscow's Bolotnya Square, which had occurred several months earlier. Feigin claimed at the time that the renewed interest was an attempt to pressure the defense in the case, according to Russian media reports.

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