Kremlin Critic Working With Saakashvili Gets Ukrainian Passport

August 04, 2015

Maria Gaidar

Prominent Russian political activist and Kremlin critic Maria Gaidar was granted Ukrainian citizenship Tuesday, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko wrote on his Twitter account.

Poroshenko personally presented Gaidar and Vladimir Fedorin, a Russian journalist and former editor-in-chief of Forbes Ukraine magazine, with their new passports.

Gaidar made headlines last month after accepting an offer to become the new deputy governor of Ukraine's Odessa region. The daughter of former Russian Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, she earlier served in the administration of Russia's central Kirovsk region.

Gaidar agreed to take up the position in southern Ukraine after weeks of negotiations, she told the Kommersant daily in late July. She now works in the gubernatorial administration of Mikheil Saakashvili — a former president of Georgia and outspoken critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin — who was in late May appointed governor of the Odessa region by Poroshenko.

Gaidar's decision elicited criticism from Russian officialdom and even accusations of high treason from some pro–Kremlin politicians.