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Russia's Spy Chief Visited Washington Amid Publication of 'Kremlin List'

January 31, 2018



Sergei Naryshkin **Kremlin Press Service**

Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) chief reportedly traveled to Washington preceding the U.S. Treasury Department's release of a blacklist of Russian individuals linked to the Kremlin.

Sergei Naryshkin, SVR chief since 2016, was named in the U.S. blacklist published Tuesday in retaliation for alleged Russian election hacking. He was already sanctioned by the U.S. after Russia's 2014 annexation of the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine, which prohibited him from traveling to the U.S. without permission from the U.S. Secretary of State.

Related article: Pride and Disbelief: Russia's Elite Reacts to U.S. 'Kremlin List'

"The director of Russia's foreign intelligence, Sergey Naryshkin, has visited the United States for consultations with U.S. counterparts on the struggle against terrorism," Russia's embassy in the U.S. wrote in a Tweet on Tuesday, citing Ambassador Anatoly Antonov.

Embed:

> The director of Russia's foreign intelligence, Sergey Naryshkin, has visited the United States for consultations with #US🇺🇸 counterparts on the struggle against terrorism - Ambassador #Antonov 🇺🇸🇺🇸https://t.co/WPeQwBMrVJ pic.twitter.com/NKl5oUaHVh
>
> — Russia in USA 🇺🇸🇺🇸 (@RusEmbUSA) January 30, 2018

Reuters later cited two sources as saying that Naryshkin's visit took place last week and that he had met U.S. Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats.

News of the visit of Russia's sanctioned foreign intelligence chief to Washington raised the ire of Democratic congressmen, including Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer.

"We sanctioned the head of their foreign intelligence, and then the Trump administration invites him to waltz through our front door. This is an extreme dereliction of duty by President Trump," Schumer was cited as saying by The Hill on Tuesday.

During an interview with state television on Tuesday, Ambassador Antonov said that contacts among Russian and U.S. intelligence services continued "even in the most difficult of times."

"Politics is politics, but work is work," he said.

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