

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

October 22, 2018



Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signing by the U.S.S.R., U.S. and Great Britain, June 12, 1968. **Alexei Stuzhin, Valentin Cheredintsev / TASS**

Nuclear exit

President Donald Trump said Washington would pull out of a Cold-War era treaty that eliminated short and intermediate-range nuclear weapons from Europe because Russia was violating the pact, triggering a warning of retaliatory measures from Moscow.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov [said](#) that a unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty was "very dangerous" and could prompt a "military-technical" retaliation.

Gorbachev's rebuke

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who signed the nuclear treaty with U.S. President Ronald Reagan in 1987, [called](#) Washington's planned decision to withdraw "unacceptable" and "a narrow-minded" decision.

Related article: [Russia Warns of Retaliation After Trump Says U.S. Is Exiting Nuclear Treaty](#)

He said the move would "undermine all the efforts made by the leaders of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. itself to reach nuclear disarmament."

"Do they really not understand in Washington what this could lead to?" he added.

Elections interference

The U.S. government on Friday charged a Russian national with playing a key financial role in a Kremlin-backed plan to conduct "information warfare" against the United States, including ongoing attempts to influence next month's congressional elections.

Yelena Khusyaynova, 44, became the first person charged with a crime for attempting to interfere in the 2018 U.S. midterm elections, according to a government official with knowledge of the investigation.

Related article: [Russian Charged With Conspiring to Interfere in U.S. Midterm Elections](#)

Khusyaynova was the chief accountant for Project Lakhta, an operation started in 2014 and financed by a Russian oligarch close to Russian President Vladimir Putin and two companies he controls, according to a criminal complaint.

Stalin's victims

Moscow authorities have reportedly refused permission for an annual ceremony honoring the victims of Stalin's terror at Lubyanka Square outside the former KGB headquarters on Oct. 29.

The local administration said Friday that construction work at the site would obstruct the event and suggested moving it to the "Wall of Grief" — a monument to the victims of political repression unveiled by President Vladimir Putin last year.

The Memorial civil rights group, which has staged the readings for the past 11 years, [called](#) the proposal to change the location "outrageous." Memorial later announced that Moscow's city hall had called for a meeting at the memorial stone on Monday to determine a location for the event.

Syria solution

A Russian delegation travelled to Damascus for a meeting with Syria's President Bashar Assad to discuss the war on terror in the country, Russia's Foreign Ministry [said](#) in a statement on Saturday.

The delegation "confirmed the firm intention to fully eradicate the terrorist presence and advance toward a long-term political solution in the interest of all Syrians," the statement said.

Factory fire

A fire broke out at the "Electrotsink" metallurgy factory in Vladikavkaz, Russia, killing at least one and injuring two, local emergencies service reported.

The fire started in the electrolyte workshop and spread to 650 square meters, but was later localized. One firefighter died and two more were injured in the fire. The fire came after four people had died in a fireworks factory explosion outside St. Petersburg on Friday.

Reuters contributed reporting.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/10/22/news-from-russia-what-you-missed-over-weekend-63255-a63255>