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'Brazen Interference': Russian Officials React to Election of Interpol's President

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Thomas White / Reuters

Officials in Moscow cited unfair Western pressure and interference in reacting to the news that a Russian major-general had lost in his bid to become the president of Interpol.

The international police body announced Wednesday that South Korea's Kim Jong-yang had been elected to serve as the organization's president for the remaining two years of his Chinese predecessor's term following the latter's disappearance.

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Prior to the vote, officials in Europe and the United States expressed widespread concern that the election of Alexander Prokopchuk, one of Interpol's four vice-presidents and a Russian national, could undermine the body's power.

This is how Russian officials reacted to the news:

– Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov:

“Of course, it is a pity that our candidate did not win. On the other hand, if we look at the statements from a number of countries on the eve of the election, of course, the pressure was huge, that’s obvious.”

– General Vladimir Dzhabarov, deputy chairman of the Federation Council’s Foreign Affairs Committee:

“It is beyond doubt that member states of the organization were pressured and cultivated. The U.S. brazenly interfered in the presidential election of this international body.”

– Andrei Klimov, deputy chairman of the Federation Council’s Foreign Affairs Committee:

“They disseminated information discrediting Prokopchuk’s dignity and reputation in order to prevent his election. We need to open [legal] cases and hound them with lawsuits.”

– Igor Morozov, deputy chairman of the Federation Council's Committee on Science, Education and Culture:

“The Americans feared that if a Russian headed Interpol, their plans to illegally prosecute and arrest Russian and other citizens in any country would fail.”

“The messaging from the U.S., the Baltic countries and Ukraine surrounding the possible election of a Russian representative to head Interpol indicates that the hybrid war against Russia continues.”

– Russian Interior Ministry:

“Prokopchuk will continue serving as Interpol vice-president for Europe. As before, his work will focus on strengthening Interpol’s position in the international police community and increasing its effectiveness.”

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