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Pro-Kremlin Activists Storm NGO Protest Forum, Saying: 'We Don't Want Maidan in Russia'

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Screenshot Facebook

Members of two infamous pro-Kremlin groups have stormed a human rights NGO's seminar on how to deal with law enforcement at protests, saying they don't want a repeat of the 2014 Ukrainian revolution in Russia.

Two fringe nationalist groups called the National Liberation Movement (NOD) and SERB are known for attacks on opposition activists and art exhibits. The Sakharov Center's seminar aimed to teach attendees about their legal rights during protests and how to defuse confrontations with riot police.

Embed:

About a dozen NOD and SERB members armed with smartphone cameras disrupted the

Sakharov Center conference less than 10 minutes after it started, footage from the Wednesday event showed.

“We’re here because we don’t want Maidan in Russia,” one of the disruptors can be seen saying, referencing the 2014 wave of civil unrest in neighboring Ukraine that ousted the country’s pro-Russian president.

“I want to walk the streets in peace. You have a designated protest spot, go and stand there and don’t raise hell,” she continued.

The SERB and NOD members spilled a foul-smelling liquid and sang patriotic songs, the U.S.-funded Svoboda.org news website, a Russian-language affiliate of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, reported.

The event moved to a neighboring Sakharov Center facility following the disruption, the organization said. Both the seminar organizers and SERB activists have reportedly filed police complaints against each other.

Related article: Pro-Kremlin Activists Storm Moscow Art Exhibit

“We’ll think about making sure we either invite the police to stand guard or hire security guards next time,” activist Irina Yatsenko told Svoboda.org.

The Sakharov Center is included in Russia’s registry of "foreign agents" — a list of NGOs that receive foreign funding and are engaged in loosely defined "political activities." It is named after the physicist Andrei Sakharov, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1975 for his opposition to the abuse of power and his work on human rights.

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