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Latvian MEP Secretly Worked for Russia's FSB for Decades – The Insider

January 29, 2024



Latvian MEP and member of the Green Group, Tatjana Zdanoka. **Edu Botella / Contacto via ZUMA Press / TASS**

A member of the European Parliament from Latvia has spent decades secretly working for Russian security services, according to a new investigation by The Insider, citing leaked emails between the politician and her suspected "handlers."

According to The Insider, Tatjana Zdanoka served as an "international observer" in Moscow's 2014 referendum that paved the way for the annexation of Crimea despite international condemnation of the move, made trips to Syria to meet with Russia-allied President Bashar al-Assad, and voted against the EU's resolution condemning the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Zdanoka was allegedly in regular contact with Dmitry Gladey, a Federal Security Service (FSB) officer from St. Petersburg, as far back as 2005.

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In their first email exchange, she sent Gladey a draft agenda and press release for a conference in Estonia, which was organized to discuss "the experience of Russian politicians" working in local European government.

At the time, Estonian intelligence services suspected that one of the conference's organizers, the non-governmental organization European Russian Alliance, was an FSB front.

The Insider did not say how it obtained the leaked email exchanges.

Zdanoka admitted she knew Gladey but did not explain why she regularly sent him emails with attachments called "reports" and shared draft initiatives and press releases.

According to The Insider, the Latvian politician continued to work with Gladey until 2013, when she was assigned a new "handler" by the name of Sergei Beltyukov, another FSB officer from St. Petersburg.

She was also said to have worked with a third Russian agent named Artem Kureyev, who the outlet describes as a self-proclaimed "human rights ombudsman of Estonia."

Zdankoa filed an application at the Belgian Embassy in Moscow to help Kureyev obtain an EU visa just weeks after Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea.

The Insider quoted her as saying that Kureyev "was invited to participate in one of several conferences that I organized in the European Parliament with the support of my political group [Greens/European Free Alliance], namely the EU Forum for Russian-Speaking Youth."

Zdanoka did not appear to deny having worked for the FSB, but in an email to the investigative news outlet, she wrote: "I cannot consider this text to be questions put to me because it is based on information that you supposedly have, which by definition, you should not have."

An unidentified high-ranking member of the Greens/European Free Alliance, to which the Zdankoa used to belong, said she was "unsurprised" about the news of the Latvian politician's alleged espionage for Moscow.

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