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Russian Spy Chief Signals More Prisoner Swap Talks With U.S. After Latest Exchange

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Ksenia Karelina after being released by Russia on Thursday. **Alex Brandon / AP / TASS**

Officials in Moscow will pursue further prisoner swap talks with the United States following an exchange earlier this week, the head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) told state media Friday.

"Dialogue with the new U.S. administration will certainly continue in various areas, including the issue you mentioned," SVR Director Sergei Naryshkin told reporters when asked about the possibility of future exchanges.

On Thursday, Russia released U.S.-Russian dual national Ksenia Karelina in exchange for Arthur Petrov, a German-Russian dual national arrested in Cyprus in 2023 at the request of U.S. authorities for allegedly exporting sensitive U.S.-made microelectronics to Russia.

The CIA played a central role in brokering Thursday's exchange, according to the Wall Street

Journal, which first broke the story. CIA Director John Ratcliffe was said to have conducted negotiations with FSB head Alexander Bortnikov and was present at the Abu Dhabi airport for the handover.

Ratcliffe had reportedly spoken multiple times with Naryshkin since becoming CIA director under the Trump administration, WSJ reported.

Naryshkin's comments on Friday came as U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff arrived in Russia for reported talks with President Vladimir Putin.

In February, Witkoff was involved in negotiations to release Marc Fogel, an American teacher jailed in Russia on drug charges, in return for Russian cryptocurrency figure Alexander Vinnik. The Trump administration hailed the release of Fogel as a positive step for diplomacy.

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