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Russian Spy Agency Claims EU Conspiring to 'Occupy' Moldova With NATO Troops

September 23, 2025



Head of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Sergei Naryshkin **Wikicommons**

Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) on Tuesday accused the European Union of planning to "occupy" Moldova with NATO forces after parliamentary elections this coming weekend.

In a statement, the SVR claimed that NATO was massing troops in neighboring Romania and in the Ukrainian port city of Odesa, either to quell protests after Sunday's vote or in preparation for elections in Moldova's breakaway, pro-Russian region of Transnistria in November.

"Euro-bureaucrats in Brussels are determined to keep Moldova in line with their Russophobic policies. They intend to do this at any cost, including deploying troops and carrying out the de facto occupation of the country," the spy agency alleged.

The claim followed mass police raids in Moldova on Monday, when authorities arrested 74 people in what they described as a criminal investigation into Russian-backed efforts to incite unrest in the country.

Moldovan authorities, including the pro-EU President Maia Sandu, accused Moscow of paying locals to buy votes and train young Moldovans to organize election violence.

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On Monday, Bloomberg reported that it had obtained documents outlining alleged Russian plans to orchestrate protests, run disinformation campaigns and recruit Moldovan voters abroad.

The SVR appeared to allude to those reports, claiming that "gross falsifications of the vote results by Brussels and Chisinau will drive desperate Moldovan citizens into the streets."

"In that case, at the request of President Maia Sandu, the armed forces of European states would force Moldovans to submit to dictatorship under the banner of Euro-democracy," the spy agency added without providing evidence.

The SVR frequently issues sweeping statements about supposed Western plots. In July, it accused NATO of militarizing Moldova and pushing the country toward confrontation with Russia.

Moldova started EU accession talks under Sandu's presidency last year.

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