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U.K. Behind Major Drone Attack on Russian Airfields, FSB Chief Claims

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FSB Director Alexander Bortnikov. **Kremlin.ru**

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) on Thursday accused the United Kingdom of helping Ukraine coordinate a large-scale drone assault on Russian military airfields this summer.

FSB Director Alexander Bortnikov claimed "direct supervision of British intelligence" helped Kyiv carry out Operation Spider Web, a coordinated drone strike in June that targeted five Russian air bases thousands of kilometers apart. He claimed the operation was "managed" by the U.K. ahead of Russian-Ukrainian peace talks in Istanbul.

"The British backed [Operation Spider Web] with propaganda, feeding the media false claims of huge damage and attributing the sabotage solely to Ukrainian forces," Bortnikov said at a meeting of security and intelligence chiefs in Uzbekistan.

Ukraine's SBU Security Service said more than 100 drones launched from inside Russia were used in the attack, which destroyed or damaged dozens of aircraft, including long-range

bombers used in missile strikes on Ukraine.

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Bortnikov also blamed Britain's Special Air Service and the MI6 intelligence agency for "planning" last month's deadly Ukrainian drone strike on the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, a Russian-Kazakh oil project backed by major multinationals.

He warned that British and Ukrainian intelligence were plotting an attack on TurkStream, the only route delivering Russian gas to European markets.

Bortnikov said Britain also exploited media coverage to "inflate hysteria" about the supposed Russian threat to Europe. He accused NATO intelligence agencies of staging "provocations" involving unidentified drones over EU territory to frame Russia and justify military spending.

"It's the British who, through provocation and disinformation, are orchestrating Brussels' strategy to derail a settlement in Ukraine," he told counterparts from former Soviet republics.

British officials have previously dismissed Russian accusations of direct involvement in Ukrainian military operations as disinformation.

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