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Russian Spy Chief Says Meeting With CIA Director Was 'Nothing Special'

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Russian Foreign Intelligence Service head Sergei Naryshkin. **Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency**

Sergei Naryshkin, the head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), confirmed Thursday that he met with CIA Director John Ratcliffe in Moscow earlier this week but otherwise sought to downplay the significance of the talks.

"The meeting took place, and there's nothing special about it," Naryshkin told state media reporters two days after Ratcliffe's rare and unannounced trip to Russia on Tuesday.

Ratcliffe's flight marks the first visit to Russia by a CIA chief since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Naryshkin said he and Ratcliffe discussed "a range of issues that fall within the scope of our intelligence services" as part of a "standard working format," but did not provide further details.

He described the work of intelligence agencies as "a delicate and special thing," and noted

that he meets with spy chiefs from other countries "almost every week, whether face-to-face or online."

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Sources previously told The Wall Street Journal that Ratcliffe was sent to Moscow to warn Russia against attacking any NATO member state. Neither Washington nor Moscow has confirmed the reporting.

U.S. President Donald Trump has also sought to temper expectations from Ratcliffe's Russia trip by calling it "sort of semi-routine." Like Naryshkin, Trump declined to address speculation surrounding the CIA director's trip, noting only that "something may come out of it," referring to Ukraine peace negotiations, which have stalled since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in February.

On Thursday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that Russia and the United States remain in contact on talks to end the war in Ukraine. He previously said that Ratcliffe did not meet with President Vladimir Putin this week.

Peskov dismissed U.S. press reports that Russia could be planning to attack NATO and that Ratcliffe had sought to warn the Kremlin against such a move.

"There's a lot of this kind of scaremongering being published right now. Naturally, it has zero basis in reality and does not reflect the intentions of the Russian Federation at all," the spokesman said.

Ratcliffe and Naryshkin have maintained regular contact since he was appointed CIA chief in January 2025.

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