

13 Russian Nationals Indicted for Interference in US Election



Summary: Special counsel Robert Mueller sent out the indictment for 13 Russian nationals and three Russian entities for meddling in the US presidential election in 2016.

Special counsel Robert Mueller made a big announcement Friday by indicting 13 Russian nationals and three Russian entities for interfering in the 2016 US presidential election. The indictment charges them with conspiracy to defraud the United States, according to the Department of Justice announcement reported by [CNN](#).

Of the national's charges, three are charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and bank fraud and five were charged with aggravated identity theft. Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein said, "The defendants allegedly conducted what they called information warfare against the United States, with the stated goal of spreading distrust towards the candidates and the political system in general."

Mueller convened the grand jury to look into any possible meddling in the presidential election and any connections between Russia and Trump campaign members. The concluding indictment solidified the US intelligence community's belief that Russia was involved in the election somehow.

President Donald Trump said of the allegations, "Russia started their anti-US campaign in 2014, long before I announced that I would run for President. The results of the election were not impacted. The Trump campaign did nothing wrong – no collusion!"

A White House statement emphasized they were "glad to see the Special Counsel's investigation further indicates – that there was NO COLLUSION between the Trump campaign and Russia and that the outcome of the election was not changed or affected."

The statement continued, "It is more important than ever before to come together as Americans. We cannot allow those seeking to sow confusion, discord, and rancor to be successful. It's time we stop the outlandish partisan attacks, wild and false allegations, and far-fetched theories, which only serve to further the agendas of bad actors, like Russia, and do nothing to protect the principles of our institutions. We must unite as Americans to protect the integrity of our democracy and our elections."

The investigation uncovered that the Russian organization Internet Research Agency (IRA) started its attack on the US political system as early as 2014. The Russian nationals posed as US persons with false personas who operated social media pages and groups created to attract US audiences. Two of the national's even traveled to the US in 2014 to collect information for their scheme.

The indictment stated that the IRA had a "strategic goal to sow discord in the US political system" by posting "derogatory information about a number of candidates." Those indicted also bought ads and communicated with members of the Trump campaign who were unaware of what was going on. They used the campaign members to coordinate political activities.

A memo to IRA staff in February 2016 directed them to post political content on the social media sites, using "any opportunity to criticize Hillary and the rest (except Sanders and Trump – we support them)."

Rosenstein noted, "There is no allegation in this indictment that any American was a knowing participant in this illegal activity. There is no allegation in the indictment that the charge conduct altered the outcome of the 2016 election."

Do you think this will be the end of the allegations that Trump was in partnership with Russia? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

To learn more about the Russia investigation, read these articles:

- [Top Official Says Russia Hacked U.S. Voter Systems](#)
- [Senate Intelligence Committee Grills Facebook, Twitter, and Google about Russia's Role in 2016 Presidential Election](#)
- [Trump Campaign Allegedly in Contact with Russians 18 Times in 2016](#)

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