

Russia Denies Interfering in US Election



Summary: Russia released a statement denying any meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election or before.

Russia is denying any involvement in the U.S. presidential election in 2016. In an announcement Monday, the Russian government is refuting the indictment implicating 13 Russian nationals of colluding in U.S. politics. Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told CNN in a phone interview that the indictment has "no substantial evidence" and holds "no indications that the Russian state could have been involved."

Peskov said, "We didn't see any substantial evidence of someone interfering in the domestic affairs." He added that the indictment "mentions Russian citizens, but we heard the accusations against the Russian state – that the Russian state, the Kremlin and the Russian government were involved."

The indictment by special counsel Robert Mueller Friday laid out the various charges against 13 Russian nationals and three Russian entities for using social media to meddle with the presidential election. The indictment accused Russia of participating in a scheme since 2014 to interfere with U.S. politics.

President Donald Trump has been insistent since winning the election that his campaign did not collude with Russia to win. He clarified his statement calling the investigations into Russia's connection a "hoax." He clarified, "I never said Russia did not meddle in the election, I said 'it may be Russia, or China or another country or group, or it may be a 400 pound genius sitting in bed and playing with his computer. The Russian 'hoax' was that the Trump campaign colluded with Russia – it never did!"

Peskov added, "There are no indications that the Russian state could have been involved in this and there can't be any. So we still insist, we think such evidence lacks foundation, we don't think it's in any case comprehensive, we don't think it's fair and we can't agree with it. Russia has never interfered, doesn't have the habit of interfering in the domestic affairs of other countries, and is not doing it now."

The accusations laid out in the indictment detail how the Internet Research Agency, a Russian entity, used social media platforms to foster division among the public. The agency allegedly created hundreds of social media accounts with stolen or fictitious identities acting as real activists.

The Russian nationals are believed to have started a disinformation campaign back in 2014, starting the spread of derogatory information about nominees Hillary Clinton, Ted Cruz, and Marco Rubio. The nationals built support for Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders. They relied heavily on Facebook, using ads to promote campaigns and spread information. The only connection found between the Trump campaign and Russia was from the Russian nationals calling members of the campaign, using their fake identities to organize rallies.

To learn more about the investigation into Russia's involvement in the United States' politics and any findings, read these articles:

- [13 Russian Nationals Indicted for Interference in US Election](#)
- [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](#)

Source: CNN

Photo: en.kremlin.ru