

Breaking Down the Mueller Report

Dmitry Peskov and Kirill Dmitriev's Post Election Trip to New York

[\(Mueller Report Page 149-156, Appendix C-22-23\)](#)

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- **According to the Mueller report, two influential Kremlin figures were in New York immediately after the election.**
- **Kirill Dmitriev, the head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund, was there explicitly to solicit meetings with Trump transition members. Dmitry Peskov, Putin's press secretary - who has been linked to the Russian interference campaign - was in town to attend the World Chess Championship.**
- **It does not appear that the FBI was closely monitoring these senior Kremlin figures while they were in New York, raising questions about the vigor of the FBI's Russia investigation.**

Key Facts from the Report

- Dmitry Peskov – Putin's press secretary and close aide – was in New York immediately after the election, purportedly to attend the opening of the World Chess Championship, which took place from November 10th through the 30th.
- The President of the World Chess Championship at the time, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, was a [sanctioned](#) Russian oligarch with close [ties](#) to the Kremlin. He asked Trump in March 2016 if Trump Tower would [host](#) the tournament (it did not). There is some evidence that the World Chess Federation and its president serve as a [covert diplomatic vehicle](#) for the Kremlin.
- Did Trump stop by the tournament? According to the report, "one World Chess Federation official recalled hearing from an attendee that President-Elect Trump had stopped by the tournament"
- Dmitriev – the head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund and central participant of the infamous Seychelles [meeting](#) – asked "Putin for permission to travel to the United States" and left for New York within 24 hours of learning Trump won.
- Dmitriev received a message reading "**Putin has won**" immediately after the election from a source that is redacted in Mueller's report. The redaction is categorized as protecting an "investigative technique," which may indicate it is likely someone that was being monitored by US intelligence, possibly a Russian government official.
- Dmitriev went to New York with the express purpose of meeting with Trump associates. He was "very anxious to connect" with the "key people" on the Trump transition team. He was "particularly focused on Kushner and Trump Jr."
- Dmitriev was ultimately able to secure [meetings](#) with Trump associates Anthony Scaramucci and Erik Prince, the latter via a meeting in Seychelles.

Overview

The New York trips of Dmitry Peskov and Kirill Dmitriev, within days of Trump's surprise victory, raise significant questions about what they did while they were in the United States. The reported motive behind the Dmitriev trip is clear: connect with senior Trump associates in an effort to plot a new course for US-Russia relations. This was explicitly stated in the report. Dmitriev also said he would "ask for Putin's permission to travel" and allegedly referred to Putin as "his boss."

[Peskov's](#) trip to the chess championship may have had greater significance, [given](#) both his reported links to the Russian interference [campaign](#) and the role of Kirsan Ilyumzhinov. Ilyumzhinov, the then-head of the World Chess Federation, was a sanctioned Kremlin-linked oligarch who is reported to have contacted Donald Trump in March 2016 about hosting the tournament. According to a [538/ABC investigation](#), the Chess Federation president "has repeatedly been alleged to act as an informal envoy for the Russian government" (he has denied working for the Kremlin.)

The Mueller report does not establish that a meeting took place with Trump at the chess tournament, and Trump denied doing so in written questions.

Additionally, George Nader, who cooperated with the Mueller investigation and was being used by Dmitriev to connect with Trump associates, says he "did not ultimately introduce Dmitriev" to anyone on the Trump team during his New York trip. However, Dmitriev also told Nader that "he would try other routes to do so besides Nader himself." The Mueller report also states "Dmitriev's contacts during the transition period were not limited to those facilitated by Nader."

The extent to which these Kremlin officials were surveilled or monitored should be explored by Congress, given they were just a short distance from Trump Tower.

Remaining Questions

- Was the FBI surveilling Peskov and Dmitriev during their visit to New York?
 - Was the sanctioned head of the World Chess Federation being monitored?
 - If so, were there any gaps in surveillance where these two officials could have met with a Trump associate without the FBI knowing?
 - How long did they stay in the US? What else did they do?
- The Mueller report cites a World Chess Federation official, who was interviewed by the Special Counsel's Office (footnote: 1024 "Marinello 5/31/18 302) who says she heard from an attendee that Trump had "stopped by" the tournament.
 - The report states that "the investigation did not establish that Trump [...] attended the event," but was the Special Counsel's Office not able to discount this claim?
 - Did Mueller speak to people who could verify Trump's whereabouts, such as Rhona Graff, his scheduler?
- Did Dmitri Peskov have a role in the Russian interference campaign?