

Past Reporting on Trump's Connections to Kremlin Shenanigans

President Donald Trump is involved in a major real estate project in the Dominican Republic that also has drawn in a billionaire Venezuelan banker whose business dealings are allegedly the target of a Department of Justice investigation.

The banker, Victor Vargas, controls one of the largest banks in Venezuela and played a key role in the development of an expansive polo club complex that came online in late 2015 in the same real estate project — a mega-tourism development called Cap Cana — where Trump now owns investment property and is exploring further business opportunities, according to public records and Narco News sources... Vargas' fortunes were enhanced by alleged kickbacks from financing deals he orchestrated over the years for the Venezuelan government, which has close ties to the **Kremlin** and whose top officials have been **linked to narco-trafficking activity**.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170620060837/https://narcosphere.narconews.com/notebook/bill-conroy/2017/06/trump-s-business-venture-dominican-republic-could-become-strangling-all>

Felix Sater's admitted contact with the Trump campaign during the election — which he would not admit to Politico in August 2016 after visiting Trump Tower — culminated in an incident where he carried an abortive secret "peace plan" between Russia and the United States over Ukraine that dovetailed with Donald Trump Jr.'s paid trip to speak a Putin-supported, Paris "peace conference" with a Syrian group.

Forbes Media recently filed an action in federal court seeking to unseal the remaining records from Felix Sater's secret criminal conviction, which contains a treasure trove of compiled research on Trump's former advisor, and included a report by freelance investigative journalist Bill Conroy about the implications of cooperation with the FBI and intelligence agencies

<https://thesternfacts.com/russian-mobster-felix-sater-advised-the-trump-campaign-d69f3a58d617>

https://web.archive.org/web/20170530143739/https://law.yale.edu/system/files/documents/pdf/motion_to_intervene.pdf

Last month, the Dominican Republic was officially labeled by the United States as a "*major drug transit or major illicit drug-producing*" country in a memorandum released by the Biden Administration.

<https://www.dominicanjusticeinitiative.com/u-s-designates-dominican-republic-as-major-drug-trafficking-hub/>

Still, some Ukrainian politicians, including former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and parliament member Sergiy Vysotskiy, claim that Firtash helped to fund Manafort's work in Ukraine with backing from the Kremlin. That work involved providing strategic assistance and political counsel to the campaign, and later the presidency, of Viktor Yanukovich, the Kremlin-backed president of Ukraine from 2010-2014.

"As I see it, it's impossible that Manafort [former campaign manager for President Donald Trump] didn't know about Russia's program of bringing Yanukovich to power, and then to occupy Ukraine in [a] hybrid strategy, if Manafort isn't a complete idiot, which seems highly unlikely to me," Vysotskiy said in an interview with Narco News.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180503191234/https://narcosphere.narconews.com/notebook/bill-conroy/2017/11/trump-insider-manafort-s-alleged-money-laundering-scheme-appears-have-k>

Firtash, once a powerful ally of Ukraine's ousted Russia-friendly President Viktor Yanukovych, faces a U.S. indictment accusing him of a conspiracy to pay bribes in India to mine titanium, which is used in jet engines.

<https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-ukrainian-firtash-diplomatic-immunity-extradition-us/32480565.html>

An Austrian court has ruled that Ukrainian businessman Dymitro Firtash can't be extradited to the U.S. in a long-running legal saga that centers on a corruption case related to an alleged plan to pay bribes in India.

<https://apnews.com/article/austria-dymitro-firtash-court-extradition-chicago-4cd7c4ef23b8ef04a85953ca47b91906>