

BACKGROUND / TIMELINE – Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn

In **June 2013**, while serving as director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn visited Moscow and first met Russian Ambassador to the U.S. **Sergei Kislyak**.¹

Flynn retired from the U.S. Army in **August 2014**, after a 33-year career in uniform.²

On **October 8, 2014**, the Defense Intelligence Agency sent Flynn a written opinion detailing the **ethics restrictions** that would apply to Flynn in retirement, including his disclosure responsibilities under the **emoluments clause**.³

In **August 2015**, Flynn reportedly first met Donald Trump at a 90-minute meeting in New York.⁴ (Trump had announced his candidacy for President on June 16, 2015.)

On **December 10, 2015, Flynn spoke in Moscow at a 10th anniversary gala for RT (formerly Russia Today)**.⁵ **He was seated next to Putin during this gala, and was paid \$33,750 for his appearance**.⁶ Flynn reportedly did not request prior authorization from the Army or the Secretary of State to accept compensation from a foreign government, as he was required to do by statute.⁷

In **February 2016, Flynn began serving as an informal foreign policy advisor to Trump**.⁸

¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/national-security-adviser-flynn-discussed-sanctions-with-russian-ambassador-despite-denials-officials-say/2017/02/09/f85b29d6-ee11-11e6-b4ff-ac2cf509efe5_story.html?utm_term=.904272116a4f

² <http://www.dia.mil/News/Articles/Article-View/Article/567011/lt-gen-flynn-retires-from-dia-33-year-army-career/>

³ <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/DIA%20Counsel%20Letter%20to%20Flynn.10.8.2014.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/02/27/michael-flynn-general-chaos>

⁵ <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/DIA%20Counsel%20Letter%20to%20Flynn.10.8.2014.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/mike-flynn-worked-for-other-russian-companies-besides-rt-documents-1489683618>

⁷ <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/04/lawmakers-flynn-likely-broke-law-in-taking-russian-payments.html>

⁸ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-trump-advisor-idUSMTZSAPEC2Q6G3JRH>

In **May 2016**, Trump became the presumptive Republican nominee. In **July 2016**, it was reported that Flynn was being vetted by the Trump campaign as a possible vice presidential candidate.⁹

On **July 15, 2016**, as the coup in Turkey was ongoing, Flynn spoke at an ACT! for America event in Cleveland and suggested support for the coup plotters. He asserted that Turkish President Erdoğan was “close to President Obama” and that the attempt to overthrow Erdoğan’s government was “worth clapping for.”¹⁰

On **August 9, 2016**, Flynn’s company, Flynn Intel Group (FIG), entered into a contract with Dutch company Inovo BV related to “improving U.S. business organizations’ confidence regarding doing business in Turkey, particularly with respect to the stability of Turkey and its suitability as a venue for investment and commercial activity.”¹¹ At the time, FIG did not register under the Lobbying Disclosure Act or the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

On August 17, 2016, Flynn joined Trump for his first classified intelligence briefing at Trump Tower.¹²

Flynn met with Turkish government officials, including the foreign minister and Erdoğan’s son-in-law, on **September 19, 2016** to discuss the possible extradition of Fetullah Gulen.¹³ James Woolsey has alleged that Flynn entertained the possibility of kidnapping Gulen. Flynn, Jeff Sessions, and Trump also met with Egyptian President al-Sisi on the same day.¹⁴

On **October 10, 2016**, Flynn met in New York with Turkish community leaders linked to Erdogan, who raised the subject of Gulen with him.¹⁵

On election day, **November 8, 2016**, Flynn published an op-ed in *The Hill* that referred to Gulen as Turkey’s Osama bin-Laden and urged the U.S. government to prioritize Turkish policy aims, significantly contradicting views he had articulated

⁹ <http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/11/politics/michael-flynn-general-trump-vp-option/>

¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1mG4aVFEiI>

¹¹ <https://www.fara.gov/docs/6406-Supplemental-Statement-20170307-1.pdf>

¹² <http://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2016-election/u-s-official-donald-trump-s-body-language-claim-doesn-n644856>

¹³ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ex-cia-director-mike-flynn-and-turkish-officials-discussed-removal-of-erdogan-foe-from-u-s-1490380426?mod=e2twp>

¹⁴ <http://dailycaller.com/2017/03/11/as-foreign-agent-for-turkey-flynn-agreed-to-form-elite-investigation-team-make-criminal-referrals/>

¹⁵ <http://dailycaller.com/2016/11/16/trump-adviser-recently-met-with-operatives-linked-to-turkish-government-agents/>

as recently as four months prior.¹⁶ FIG was still under contract with Inovo BV, owned by Turkish-American businessman Ekim Alptekin, at the time, though Alptekin denied that he represented the Turkish government or that Flynn had coordinated the op-ed with him in advance.

On **November 9, 2016**, the day after his election victory, Trump received a congratulatory call from Erdogan.¹⁷

On November 10, 2016, President Obama met with President-elect Trump. Obama reportedly personally warned Trump against hiring Michael Flynn as National Security Advisor.¹⁸

On **November 15, 2016**, Flynn joined Trump for an intelligence briefing at the White House.¹⁹ FIG's contract with Inovo BV expired on **November 16, 2016**, according to a termination report FIG filed with the Justice Department on November 30.²⁰

On **November 17, 2016** at least two media outlets published articles about Flynn's relationship with Alptekin and Turkish interests.²¹ The Trump transition team declined to comment for these pieces.²²

On November 18, 2016, Trump announced that he would name Flynn as his National Security Advisor.²³

In late November 2016, according to the *Washington Post*, senior members of Trump's transition team were so worried about Flynn's contacts with Kislyak

¹⁶ <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/foreign-policy/305021-our-ally-turkey-is-in-crisis-and-needs-our-support>

¹⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-turkey-erdogan-idUSKBN1343I8>

¹⁸ <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/obama-warned-trump-against-hiring-mike-flynn-say-officials-n756316>

¹⁹ <http://www.nbcnews.com/card/trump-pence-expected-receive-daily-briefing-tuesday-n684186>

²⁰ <https://soprweb.senate.gov/index.cfm?event=getFilingDetails&filingID=C68C8A30-5542-4D75-9B95-43D036BD34B5&filingTypeID=81>

²¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-adviser-michael-flynn-plans-to-sever-consulting-firm-ties-if-tapped-for-administration-1479417634>

²² <https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-adviser-michael-flynn-plans-to-sever-consulting-firm-ties-if-tapped-for-administration-1479417634>

²³ <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/michael-flynn-national-security-adviser-231591>

that they warned Flynn personally that Kislyak's conversations were almost certainly being monitored by U.S. intelligence agencies.²⁴

According to the *Daily Caller*, internal Justice Department documents show that **DOJ National Security Division officials contacted Flynn on November 30, 2016 to raise concerns about his work on behalf of Inovo BV.**²⁵ These documents reportedly indicate that Flynn's November 8 op-ed and subsequent media coverage prompted DOJ to contact him.

In early **December 2016, Flynn and Jared Kushner reportedly met with Russian Ambassador Sergei Kislyak at Trump Tower.**²⁶ As a follow-up to that meeting, a Kushner associate again met with Kislyak. Kushner then met with Sergei Gorkov, head of sanctioned Russian bank Vnesheconombank, later in **December 2016.**²⁷

Flynn, Kushner, and Steve Bannon reportedly also met with Emirati Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed in **December 2016**, an encounter that appears more significant in light of reports that the crown prince later arranged a back-channel meeting in the Seychelles between emissaries of Trump and Putin.²⁸ (Kushner did not disclose these meetings at the time, nor did Flynn disclose his own meeting with Kislyak.)

Flynn reportedly called Kislyak on December 19, 2016 to express condolences for the assassination of the Russian ambassador to Turkey.²⁹ Flynn and Kislyak then exchanged holiday greetings by text on **December 25, 2016**, according to an account by Sean Spicer.

On December 28, 2016, Flynn again spoke to Kislyak at least once; Trump transition officials told Ignatius the conversation was about a Russian military plane crash, upcoming Syria peace talks in Kazakhstan, and to discuss plans for a

²⁴ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/flynn-was-warned-by-trump-transition-officials-about-contacts-with-russian-ambassador/2017/05/05/b552c832-3192-11e7-8674-437ddb6e813e_story.html?utm_term=.e0e25d495a3c

²⁵ <http://dailycaller.com/2017/03/31/heres-what-prompted-michael-flynn-to-register-as-an-agent-of-turkey/>

²⁶ https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/02/us/politics/kushner-flynn-sessions-russia.html?smid=tw-share&_r=0

²⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/27/us/politics/senate-jared-kushner-russia.html>

²⁸ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/blackwater-founder-held-secret-seychelles-meeting-to-establish-trump-putin-back-channel/2017/04/03/95908a08-1648-11e7-ada0-1489b735b3a3_story.html?utm_term=.9ba552e47aa4

²⁹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-did-obama-dawdle-on-russias-hacking/2017/01/12/75f878a0-d90c-11e6-9a36-1d296534b31e_story.html?utm_term=.b4822186e92a

Trump-Putin call after the inauguration. Spicer (on January 13) also said the call had “centered on the logistics” of a Trump-Putin call.³⁰

On **December 29, 2016, President Obama levied sanctions on Russia for its interference in the election and ejected Russian diplomats from the U.S.**³¹ **Flynn reportedly called Kislyak several times that day**, according to “senior U.S. government officials” who spoke to Ignatius.³²

On December 30, 2016, Putin announced Russia would not retaliate.³³

Obama administration officials reportedly learned of Flynn’s December 29 conversations with Kislyak on **January 2, 2017.**³⁴

On **January 10, 2017**, the National Security Council Principals Committee met to discuss the upcoming Raqqa offensive, which was set to include significant Kurdish participation.³⁵ Susan Rice reportedly briefed Flynn shortly thereafter and was told by Flynn not to approve anything; “we’ll make the decision.”

On **January 12, 2017**, David Ignatius published his account of the Flynn-Kislyak calls.³⁶ A transition official told the *Washington Post* on **January 13, 2017** that “sanctions were not discussed whatsoever.”³⁷ Spicer claims to reporters that Flynn’s call with Kislyak focused on a Trump-Putin call.³⁸

³⁰ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/first-sign-of-enhanced-us-russia-relations-under-trump-an-invite-to-syria-talks/2017/01/13/81d443d6-d9b9-11e6-9f9f-5cdb4b7f8dd7_story.html?utm_term=.1862e265eb21

³¹ <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/29/executive-order-taking-additional-steps-address-national-emergency>

³² https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-did-obama-dawdle-on-russias-hacking/2017/01/12/75f878a0-d90c-11e6-9a36-1d296534b31e_story.html?utm_term=.b4822186e92a

³³ https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/30/world/europe/russia-diplomats-us-hacking.html?_r=0

³⁴ https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/01/us/politics/obama-trump-russia-election-hacking.html?_r=0

³⁵ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/obamas-white-house-worked-for-months-on-a-plan-to-seize-raqqa-trumps-team-deemed-it-hopelessly-inadequate/2017/02/02/116310fa-e71a-11e6-80c2-30e57e57e05d_story.html?utm_term=.423975833b39

³⁶ https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-did-obama-dawdle-on-russias-hacking/2017/01/12/75f878a0-d90c-11e6-9a36-1d296534b31e_story.html?utm_term=.b4822186e92a

³⁷ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/justice-department-warned-white-house-that-flynn-could-be-vulnerable-to-russian-blackmail-officials-say/2017/02/13/fc5dab88-f228-11e6-8d72-263470bf0401_story.html?utm_term=.c04b884f656a

³⁸ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/first-sign-of-enhanced-us-russia-relations-under-trump-an-invite-to-syria-talks/2017/01/13/81d443d6-d9b9-11e6-9f9f-5cdb4b7f8dd7_story.html?utm_term=.e633358204c1

On **January 14, 2017**, Flynn reportedly told Pence he had not discussed sanctions with Kislyak.³⁹

On **January 15, 2017**, Pence and Reince Priebus both went on Sunday shows and insisted that Flynn had not discussed sanctions or the expulsion of diplomats with Kislyak. In response to John Dickerson's question about whether "the Flynn conversation [with Kislyak] help[ed] pave the way for that sort of more temperate response" by Russia, Pence asserted that Flynn and Kislyak "did not discuss anything having to do with the United States' decision to expel diplomats or impose censure against Russia."⁴⁰ Priebus told Chuck Todd that "none of that came up. **The subject matter of sanctions or the actions taken by the Obama [administration] did not come up in the conversation.**"⁴¹ [Excerpted transcripts of these appearances are attached.]

On **January 18, 2017**, Flynn and other transition officials (including Devin Nunes) attended a breakfast meeting with the Turkish foreign minister at the Trump Hotel in DC.⁴²

On **January 19, 2017**, Sally Yates reportedly discussed the possibility of briefing the incoming administration about Flynn's conversations with Kislyak. Jim Comey reportedly dissents for fear of complicating an ongoing investigation.⁴³

On **January 22, 2017**, Flynn reportedly denied having discussed sanctions with Kislyak in a conversation with Sean Spicer.⁴⁴ The *Wall Street Journal* reported on the same day that Flynn was the subject of a counterintelligence investigation related to his contacts with Kislyak.⁴⁵ On **January 23, 2017**, Spicer again says Flynn had just "one call" with Kislyak and that sanctions were not discussed.⁴⁶

³⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/02/14/us/politics/flynn-call-russia-timeline.html>

⁴⁰ <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/face-the-nation-transcript-january-15-2017-pence-manchin-gingrich/>

⁴¹ <http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-01-15-17-n707086>

⁴² <https://www.dailysabah.com/diplomacy/2017/01/18/fm-cavusoglu-meets-trumps-top-national-security-advisor>

⁴³ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/justice-department-warned-white-house-that-flynn-could-be-vulnerable-to-russian-blackmail-officials-say/2017/02/13/fc5dab88-f228-11e6-8d72-263470bf0401_story.html?utm_term=.c04b884f656a

⁴⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/02/14/us/politics/flynn-call-russia-timeline.html>

⁴⁵ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-eyes-michael-flynns-links-to-russia-1485134942>

⁴⁶ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/white-house-says-trump-asked-for-flynns-resignation-after-loss-of-trust-1487099796>

Flynn was reportedly interviewed by the FBI on January 24, 2017.⁴⁷ It is not clear whether he was truthful about the content of his conversations with Kislyak.

On **January 25, 2017**, Flynn briefed Trump on Secretary of Defense James Mattis's recommendations for a raid in Yemen.⁴⁸

On **January 26, 2017**, Yates reportedly spoke with White House Counsel Don McGahn about Flynn's apparent dishonesty and his vulnerability to exploitation by foreign intelligence.⁴⁹

On **January 27, 2017**, the Trump signed the "travel ban" executive order.⁵⁰

On **January 28, 2017**, Trump spoke with Vladimir Putin for nearly an hour on the phone; Flynn joined Trump in the Oval Office for the call.^{51 52 53}

Yates was fired on **January 30, 2017**, after instructing Justice Department attorneys not to defend the travel ban EO.⁵⁴

During a February 8, 2017 interview with the *Washington Post*, Flynn "categorically denied discussing sanctions" with Kislyak.⁵⁵

On February 9, 2017, the *New York Times*, citing "current and former American officials," reported that Flynn had indeed discussed sanctions and areas of possible cooperation with Kislyak during a late-December call. The officials reportedly described Flynn's message to Kislyak as "unambiguous and highly inappropriate," and said that the conversation "was only one in a series of

⁴⁷ <http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-02-19-17-n722976>

⁴⁸ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/02/02/press-briefing-press-secretary-sean-spicer-222017-7>

⁴⁹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/white-house-says-trump-asked-for-flynn-s-resignation-after-loss-of-trust-1487099796>

⁵⁰

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj39LDxkNnTAhVG5yYKHYQOBfsQFggsMAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whitehouse.gov%2Fthe-press-office%2F2017%2F01%2F27%2Fexecutive-order-protecting-nation-foreign-terrorist-entry-united-states&usq=AFQjCNGkiG4dA_D8FYQ5nfK65oenrCe3qg

⁵¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/28/readout-presidents-call-russian-president-vladimir-putin>

⁵² <http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/01/29/512268735/trump-speaks-with-putin-in-50-minute-phone-call>

⁵³ <https://twitter.com/PressSec/status/825389810869219328>

⁵⁴ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/30/statement-appointment-dana-boente-acting-attorney-general>

⁵⁵ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/justice-department-warned-white-house-that-flynn-could-be-vulnerable-to-russian-blackmail-officials-say/2017/02/13/fc5dab88-f228-11e6-8d72-263470bf0401_story.html?postshare=9041487070357136&tid=ss_tw&utm_term=.976d4fdb324

contacts between the two men that began before the election.”⁵⁶ Later the same day, Flynn revised his account to the *Post*, saying through a spokesman that he “couldn’t be certain that the topic never came up.”⁵⁷

On **February 10, 2017**, Trump tells reporters on Air Force One that he will “look into” reports concerning Flynn misleading administration officials about his contacts with Kislyak.⁵⁸ “I don’t know about that. I haven’t seen it.”⁵⁹

On the evening of Saturday, **February 11, 2017**, Trump, Abe, Flynn, and other aides huddled on the patio of Mar-a-Lago in view of other diners while discussing a joint response to a North Korean missile test.⁶⁰

On February 13, 2017, the *Washington Post* reported on Yates’s notification of McGahn. Lt. General Flynn resigns.^{61 62 63}

On **February 14, 2017**, Spicer defended the administration’s handling of the Flynn situation during the daily press briefing.⁶⁴ According to Spicer, the 18-day delay between notification and Trump’s request for Flynn’s resignation was driven by a need to evaluate the truthfulness of Flynn’s statements to Pence: “Whether or not he actually misled the Vice President was the issue, and that was ultimately what led to the President asking for and accepting the resignation of General Flynn. That’s it, pure and simple. It was a matter of trust.”

On **February 15, 2017**, Trump said Flynn is a “wonderful man” and that “it’s very, very unfair what’s happened to General Flynn.”⁶⁵

⁵⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/09/us/flynn-is-said-to-have-talked-to-russians-about-sanctions-before-trump-took-office.html>

⁵⁷ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/justice-department-warned-white-house-that-flynn-could-be-vulnerable-to-russian-blackmail-officials-say/2017/02/13/fc5dab88-f228-11e6-8d72-263470bf0401_story.html?postshare=9041487070357136&tid=ss_tw&utm_term=.976d4fdb324

⁵⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/10/us/politics/donald-trump-michael-flynn-russia-sanctions.html>

⁵⁹ <http://www.cnn.com/2017/02/10/politics/flynn-russia-us-sanctions-reports/>

⁶⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/13/us/politics/mar-a-lago-north-korea-trump.html>

⁶¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/justice-department-warned-white-house-that-flynn-could-be-vulnerable-to-russian-blackmail-officials-say/2017/02/13/fc5dab88-f228-11e6-8d72-263470bf0401_story.html?utm_term=.c04b884f656a

⁶² <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/13/us/politics/donald-trump-national-security-adviser-michael-flynn.html>

⁶³ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/white-house-says-trump-asked-for-flynn-s-resignation-after-loss-of-trust-1487099796>

⁶⁴ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/02/14/press-briefing-press-secretary-sean-spicer-2142017-12>

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<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiKw->

In a **February 19, 2017** appearance on Meet the Press, Reince Priebus offered his account of the Yates/Flynn timeline, telling Chuck Todd that he learned he had been misled “sometime after January 27th.”⁶⁶

On **March 7, 2017**, Flynn filed a retroactive FARA registration for his Inovo BV contract work on behalf of the Turkish government.⁶⁷

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⁶⁶ <http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-02-19-17-n722976>

⁶⁷ <http://www.politico.com/story/2017/03/michael-flynn-lobby-turkey-235843>