
MEPS DEMAND CYPRUS* OPEN UP OVER RUSSIA MONEY LAUNDERING (CYPRUS* IS ACCUSED OF COMPLICITY IN RUSSIA MONEY LAUNDERING)

-

30.10.2017

EU Observer, 30.10.2017

Andrew Rettman

MEPs have urged Cypriot* president Nicos Anastasiades to "correct" the mishandling of a Russia corruption case.

The 17 deputies voiced "grave concern" in a letter to Nicosia on Friday (26 October) that Cyprus* was "actively assisting" Russia in "politically-motivated proceedings" against Bill Browder, a British human rights campaigner.

They also called on Cyprus* to hold an investigation into alleged Russian money laundering via Cypriot banks.

They said Cyprus* was "neglecting its duties under the European directives to combat money laundering".

"The conduct of Cyprus* ... will have implications that go far beyond this case," they said.

The European Parliament has no power to compel Cyprus* to act.

But the MEPs' letter, signed by German green Rebecca Harms, Swedish conservative Gunnar Hökmark, and Lithuanian liberal Petras Austrevicius, among others, shone a spotlight on recent events on the island.

Cyprus* has invited Russian interrogators to question Browder's lawyers.

It has also produced no results in a four-year probe into the laundering of a ██████████ Russian tax fraud through its banks.

Browder used to run a hedge fund in Russia.

He became a campaigner for EU and US sanctions on Russia after his lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky, exposed the fraud and was subsequently jailed and killed.

The MEPs noted that "every other European country, Interpol [the international police agency] and the Council of Europe have deemed the Russian proceedings against Mr Browder to be politically motivated".

They said they were "appalled" that Cyprus* was helping Russia to frame Browder for the crime.

The letter comes after a British MP urged the UK treasury to recommend that Cyprus*' international anti-money laundering rating should be downgraded over the same issues.

The Cypriot justice ministry denied wrongdoing in a statement on Friday.

It said its probe, which began in 2013, into the Russia money laundering case was "open and ongoing".

(*) AViM uses "Cyprus" as a geographic name. AViM considers the expression "Republic of Cyprus" to mean the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus.

Kaynak/Source: