

Romania's Ambassador To U.S. In Trouble After Criticizing Giuliani Letter

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Romania's ambassador to the United States is in trouble with his superiors after he criticized a letter from U.S. President Donald Trump's personal lawyer about Romania's leaders.

George Maior was recalled to Bucharest by the Foreign Ministry to discuss remarks he made about a letter penned from Rudy Giuliani and published by Romanian media on August 27.

In the letter addressed to President Klaus Iohannis and Prime Minister Viorica Dancila, Giuliani wrote he was concerned about "continued damage to the rule of law in Romania, committed under the pretext of law enforcement."

He also criticized what he called the "excesses" of Romania's anticorruption agency and the country's Intelligence Service.

Maior, who has been ambassador to Washington since 2015 and is a former head of the Intelligence Service, [responded](#) by saying Giuliani's letter resulted from "a lobby initiated by people interested in defending figures who have problems with the justice system."

"Ambassador George Maior had a stance that was not approved at the central level in the Foreign Ministry or the government and it does not represent the Romanian Foreign Ministry's stance," [a ministry statement said](#). "His role is to promote the national interest ... and he is required to abstain from public statements that can negatively affect bilateral relations with other states."

It wasn't immediately clear why exactly Giuliani was wading into Romanian politics. Though he is currently Trump's personal lawyer, he has no official position in the Trump administration.

He does, however, have a successful management consulting and security consulting business that has done work in Eastern Europe. The company had a consulting contract with the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv.

Giuliani's positions on Romania's anticorruption moves are at odds with that of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Wess Mitchell, who has praised Romania's "historic headway" in fighting graft.

"Romania is an indelible symbol of the success of democracy," Mitchell also said in a [speech at Bucharest University](#) on June 18.

Giuliani's attack against Romania's performance in fighting corruption is not singular.

Former FBI Director Louis Freeh last week outlined in an [interview with Forbes](#) a five-point plan to "restore the rule of law in Romania."

Freeh, who was FBI director from 1993 to 2001, is now an independent consultant through his own firm, FGIS, which includes advising a Romanian defendant who is contesting his conviction by Romania's anticorruption body.

There has been growing concern in other European Union capitals about Romania backsliding on efforts to root out endemic corruption.

Last month, Iohannis fired Laura Kovesi, the head of the country's anticorruption agency, amid growing pressure from the ruling Social Democratic Party.

The justice minister in February called for Kovesi's removal in February, accusing her of exceeding her authority.

The moves to undo some of the anticorruption policies has sparked anger, and [led to widespread protests earlier this month.](#)

With reporting by RFE/RL's Moldovan Service, AP and Balkan Insight