

Zhirinovsky Demands Gudkov's Arrest for Trip to U.S.

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Gudkov gesturing while on stage at an opposition demonstration last year. **Igor Tabakov**

Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the outspoken leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, has demanded that Just Russia Deputy Dmitry Gudkov be arrested for traveling to the U.S. to speak at a Freedom House forum, state media reported Tuesday.

The forum, titled "New Approach or Business as Usual? U.S.-EU-Russia Relations After Putin's Crackdown," was held in Washington D.C. on March 4.

Human rights activist Lyudmila Alexeyeva and Mikhail Kasyanov, co-chairman of the Republican Party of Russia – People's Freedom Party, also spoke at the event, where the main topic of discussion was how to stop corruption in the Russian government.

In comments to RIA-Novosti, however, Zhirinovsky said that Gudkov, as a representative of the Russian government, cannot travel to other countries and conduct negotiations, and

should be deprived of his State Duma seat for betraying his country.

"He is a part of the government and goes to the U.S., which is preparing a war against our country, and he's going there and kowtowing to them," Zhirinovskiy said.

"I demand the arrest of Gudkov and the removal of his parliamentary mandate for his betrayal of the country," Zhirinovskiy said.

Zhirinovskiy's comments follow an earlier statement by A Just Russia leader Sergei Mironov that Gudkov did not inform anybody of his trip, and that he himself "learned of the trip only from the newspapers."

Georgy Fyodorov, president of the Aspekt center for political and social research and a member of the Public Chamber, called Gudkov's actions "unethical" and said the Duma's Ethics Committee should look into the incident.

In comments to RIA-Novosti, Gudkov said he paid for the trip with his own money and was ready to provide confirmation of this. "I'm being very open and public [about this]," he said.

He also said he intends to check with the U.S. Embassy to determine which other members of the State Duma and the Public Chamber received U.S. visas recently.

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