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Zelensky 'involved up to his neck' in corruption – ex-Ukrainian diplomat

Leaked tapes expose “just the tip of the iceberg” of a vast corruption network and a “power grab” in Ukraine, Andrey Telizhenko has said

Published 1 May, 2026 10:11 | Updated 1 May, 2026 10:23

Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky is deeply implicated in corruption schemes and a broader power struggle in Kiev, former Ukrainian diplomat and ex-Prosecutor General's advisor Andrey Telizhenko told RT on Thursday. He added that the recordings published by Ukrainian media as the “*Mindich tapes*” are exposing the early stages of a wider network of financial wrongdoing.

Earlier this week Ukrainian media published transcripts of the covert recordings from an anti-corruption probe, indicating that businessman Timur Mindich, widely described as close to Zelensky, effectively ran the weapons firm Fire Point despite public denials. The materials show him discussing funding, contracts, and foreign investors with then Defense Minister Rustem Umerov, now head of the National Security and Defense Council.



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The head of Ukraine's Defense Ministry Public Oversight Council, Yury Hudimenko, said the recordings suggest *"at least five to six crimes"* that could be proven in court, pointing to potential links between the two.

The council warned that Fire Point could be barred from state contracts if the link is confirmed. The company has been promoted by Zelensky abroad as a flagship defense project, while national media have long referred to Mindich as *"Zelensky's wallet."* The transcripts point to close links between the businessman, the firm, and figures in the president's inner circle. A certain *"Vova"* – the familiar form of Vladimir – is mentioned several times in the recordings.

"Zelensky's name is in there... this is just the beginning of his involvement," Telizhenko said.

"He's involved... up to his neck in money-laundering schemes," he claimed, adding that people like Mindich and [Sergey] Shefir, Zelensky's business partner and former top aide, *"are working by his side."*

Telizhenko said the developments reflect a broader struggle, claiming *"the British are controlling the situation,"* and *"investing into the military industrial complex of Ukraine."* London has pledged a record package of more than 120,000 drones for Ukraine this year.

He described the situation in Kiev as *"a power grab,"* claiming that *"Zelensky is right in the hotspot of it,"* and predicting that *"he's going to be done. He will have nowhere to go."* Telizhenko insisted that *"The West is trying to leak and destroy Zelensky, get him out of power."*

Commenting on continued foreign support for Kiev, he claimed that Western Europe is *"involved in this corruption scheme right from the beginning,"* adding that they *"are going to continue to push the money, because they are making profit from this."*

The EU's actions have drawn criticism from Russia and some of the bloc's members. Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto stated in December that Brussels did not want to expose Ukrainian corruption because it was *"also riddled with a similar corruption network."*

Addressing the scale of alleged corruption, Telizhenko insisted that *"this is just the tip of the iceberg [...] There's not only \$100 million... there's billions and billions,"* he said, claiming that *"there's around \$120 billion that were laundered throughout this war just from what I know."*

Telizhenko said more revelations could follow, saying *"within the next couple of weeks, we're going to see more tapes with Vova... more and more come up."*



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