



Leaked call raises questions about who was behind sniper attacks in Ukraine

Dana Ford, CNN
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Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet and EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton at a meeting in 2013. RAIGO PAJULA/AFP/Getty

(CNN) — Don't read too much into the conversation.

That was the message Wednesday from Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet after a phone call between him and European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton was leaked.

In the recording, which was posted to YouTube and picked up by Russian media, Paet talks about his recent visit to Ukraine. He says a doctor named "Olga" told him opponents of Ukraine's ousted President may have been responsible for deadly sniper fire.

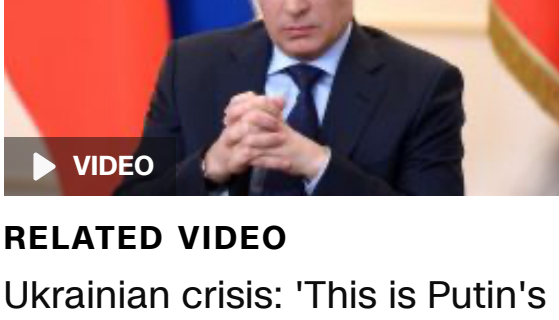


President Viktor Yanukovych fled more than a week ago in the wake of protests in Kiev's Independence Square, where snipers from nearby rooftops killed scores of people.



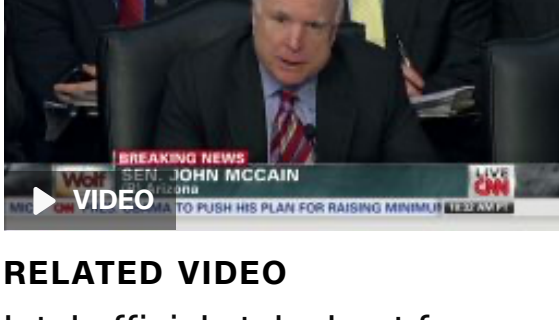
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"(Olga) can say that it is the same handwriting, the same type of bullets, and it's really disturbing that now the new coalition that – they don't want to investigate what exactly happened. There is now stronger and stronger understanding that behind snipers, it was not Yanukovych, but it was somebody from the new coalition," Paet told Ashton.

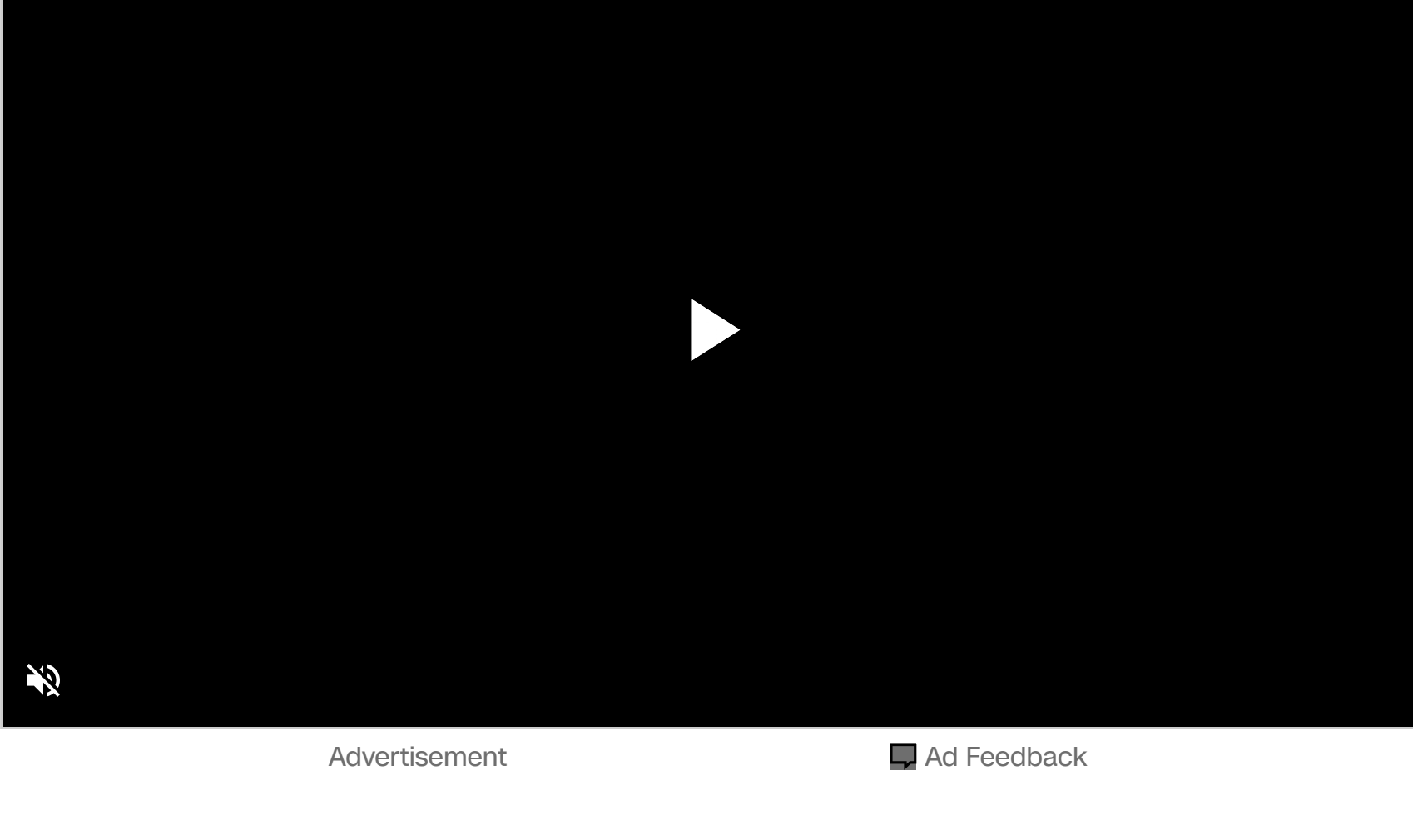


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She replied: "I think we do want to investigate ... I didn't pick that up. That's interesting. Gosh."



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Paet's office released a statement Wednesday that confirmed the authenticity of the recording. It said the call took place on February 26.

"Foreign Minister Paet was giving an overview of what he had heard the previous day in Kiev and expressed concern over the situation on the ground. We reject the claim that Paet was giving an assessment of the opposition's involvement in the violence," the statement read.

"It is extremely regrettable that phone calls are being intercepted," said Paet in the same statement. "The fact that this phone call has been leaked is not a coincidence."

Ashton's office declined to comment on the conversation, saying she does not discuss leaks.

CNN could not immediately reach the Ukrainian government for comment, nor could it confirm the identity of "Olga."

Russia's state-news agency RIA-Novosti said she was Olga Bogomolets, chief coordinator of medical aid at the main protest camp in Independence Square.

CNN has previously talked to Bogomolets. She volunteered last month to treat protesters and accused forces of shooting to kill, saying she had treated 13 people she believed had been targeted by "professional snipers."

"They were shot directly to their hearts, their brain and to their neck," she said. "They didn't give any chance to doctors, for us, to save lives."

The recording is the second such recent leak on Ukraine.

Early last month, a leaked audio recording of a phone call allegedly caught a U.S. diplomat to Europe using profanity to express strong frustrations with inaction and indecision by the European Union in resolving the crisis.

In the conversation, voices closely resembling those of Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Victoria Nuland and U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt discuss a plan to broker a deal between the Ukrainian government and the opposition.

At one point the woman, who sounds like Nuland, can be heard saying "f**k the EU."

The call could not be independently verified, and it was not clear when and where it was recorded.

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CNN's Elise Labott contributed to this report.

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