

Ukraine Blacklists Steven Seagal as National Security Threat

Boris Djuric May 07, 2017



Renowned Hollywood actor and martial arts master Steven Seagal was granted Russian citizenship from Vladimir Putin in person. Photo: Sputnik/Alexey Druzhinin

Kiev has cited Seagal as “œa national security threat,” banning him from entering the country for five years.

([Newswire.net](#) -- May 7, 2017) -- Ukraine has declared American action film star Steven Seagal persona non grata, as it has earlier blacklisted French actor Gerard Depardieu and many other public figures over their close ties with Russia.

The action film star has responded sarcastically, saying that "apart from a black-belt, I have a black list now," Seagal's representative has told Russian news agency TASS, [Russia Today reported](#).

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) has confirmed that the 65-year old actor has been deemed as “a national security threat” and barred from the country for a five-year period. The decision to declare Segal persona non grata was made in July 2015, after the actor, who is also a musician, took the stage at a concert in Crimea in 2014. The concert was organized by Russian motorcycle club the Night Wolves, a biking group similar to the Hells Angels in the US.

In a statement, the SBU did not offer any details on what got Seagal banned from Ukraine, only describing the US actor as socially dangerous.

“A decision concerning an entry ban is taken if there is enough information... about a person committing a socially dangerous act that contradicts the interests of Ukraine's security protection irrespective of a territory where it was committed,” the statement said.

According to the release, it is in the SBU's jurisdiction to ban anyone that the body finds 'socially dangerous,' but the service isn't obligated to provide any detail to support their claims.

In July 2015, Segal was declared persona non grata by the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture along with some 600 other people who are no longer welcome in Ukraine. The list of celebrities barred from Ukraine includes French Actor Gerard Depardieu, who has received a Russian passport, former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi for his support to Crimea's reunification with Russia, and former world boxing champion Roy Jones Jr., who holds dual American and Russian citizenship.

In November 2016, Russian President Vladimir Putin personally handed a Russians passport to the Hollywood star, whose father was the son of Russian Jews who moved to the US.

The American actor, famous for his martial arts movies, holds a 7th dan (degree) black belt in Aikido, a modern Japanese martial art.

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