

## Litvinenko's widow denies MI6 link

Target?: Marina Litvinenko lives in hiding in a London safe-house with her son Anatoly

By David Harrison

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The widow of the murdered Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko has denied new claims that her husband worked for MI6. Marina Litvinenko said last night that the allegation, from unnamed British diplomatic and intelligence sources, was "nonsense".

"My husband was never an agent for MI6," she told The Sunday Telegraph. "He was a critic of the Russian government but he spoke out openly. He was well-known. And his special area was organised crime, not intelligence.

"He was not the kind of person who would be useful to the British security services."

According to a newspaper report, which was given wide circulation in the Russian media, the former KGB officer was recruited by Sir John Scarlett, the head of MI6 who was once based in Moscow. Litvinenko was said to have received a £2,000 monthly retainer.

Mrs Litvinenko said her husband was a consultant to businessmen wanting to trade with Russia and also worked for the civil liberties foundation set up by the billionaire Russian exile Boris Berezovsky, who lives in Berkshire. Her 44-year-old husband, who was poisoned with radioactive polonium-210 in London a year ago this week, had also worked as an adviser to police pursuing Russian criminals in countries including Spain and Georgia.

Alex Goldfarb, a friend of Mr Litvinenko and co-author with his widow of a book on his murder, published in June, said: "Litvinenko was living in England. I don't see what value he could have been to the British security services. Putin's regime believes that there is a British conspiracy against Russia and that Russian exiles in England are working for the security services. They are paranoid."

The fresh allegations echo those made by Andre Lugovoi — the former KGB bodyguard who British police believe slipped polonium-210 into Mr Litvinenko's tea at the Millennium hotel in London on November 1 last year.