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No Tit-for-Tat on Magnitsky – Yet

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The Foreign Ministry is not yet ready to retaliate for a U.S. decision to blacklist senior officials implicated in lawyer Sergei Magnitsky's death, a ministry spokesman said Thursday.

Moscow said this summer that it would hit back after the U.S. State Department acknowledged imposing travel bans on dozens of Russian officials.

Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich told reporters Thursday that this would only happen once the U.S. sanctions started working. "When this is being realized in practice, we will claim the right to reply correspondingly," he said in comments carried on the ministry's web site.

Washington said in July that it had blacklisted an unspecified number of Russians linked to the 2009 death of Hermitage Capital lawyer Sergei Magnitsky. The move was widely believed to be an attempt to calm U.S. senators who were seeking much wider sanctions against at least 60 officials.

Assistant Secretary of State Michael Posner said Thursday that the administration of President Barack Obama opposed the sanctions bill introduced by Senator Ben Cardin

in May. Speaking on Echo Moskvy radio, Posner said human rights violators could be denied U.S. visas under long-standing rules that apply to all nationalities.

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