

Sweden Sends Diplomat to Belarus After Teddy Stunt

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STOCKHOLM — The Swedish Foreign Ministry says it is sending a diplomat to Belarus after its ambassador was expelled last year following a Swedish advertising agency's stunt air-drop of hundreds of teddy bears into the former Soviet state.

Ministry spokeswoman Charlotta Ozaki Macias says the Belarussian government announced on Tuesday it had consented to Stockholm's request to give accreditation to a Swedish diplomat and reopen the embassy.

Belarus did not officially cite the July 4 pro-human rights teddy bear drop as the reason for closing the Scandinavian country's embassy and barring the envoy, but its authoritarian president, Alexander Lukashenko, was quoted as accusing Swedish diplomats of involvement in the stunt.

Ozaki Macias said Wednesday that relations between Sweden and Belarus had changed from "frosty to much more constructive."

(AP)

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