

# Russian Foreign Ministry Sees Provocation in Scholar's Denied Entry Into Estonia

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Russia's Foreign Ministry said Monday that Estonia's refusal to allow a prominent Russian scholar into the country was a "provocation" and pledged Moscow would retaliate against Tallinn's decision.

Valery Tishkov, the head of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, was denied entry into Estonia on Sunday where he was set to speak at a media conference hosted by Impressum, an NGO Estonian officials believe is being used as a platform to promote Russia's interests in the Baltic states.

"We regard the actions of the Estonian side as a provocation aimed at hindering open and unbiased exchanges between the public and scientific communities of the two countries," the Russian Foreign Ministry's online statement read, adding the measure highlighted the hypocrisy of Estonia's "commitment to democracy and freedom of speech."

Other prominent Russians have also been denied entry into the Baltic states in recent months.

In July, Latvia blacklisted Russian pop stars Iosif Kobzon, Valeriya and Oleg Gazmanov, denying them entry into the country for their pro-Russian stance on Ukraine, which Latvian authorities said undermined the country's "sovereignty and territorial integrity."

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