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Norway to Summon Russian Ambassador Over Rogozin's Arctic Trip

April 20, 2015



Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende.

Norway's Foreign Ministry said it would summon the Russian ambassador on Monday after the country's deputy premier angered Oslo by visiting an Arctic territory, despite a travel ban imposed on him over the annexation of Crimea, a news report said.

Russian Ambassador Vyacheslav Pavlovsky would be asked on Monday to give an "explanation" for the trip by Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, the country's TV2 television cited Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende as saying.

The Norwegian government was angered by Rogozin's visit to the island of Spitsbergen — an international demilitarized and free economic zone that is considered a sovereign entity of the Norwegian state. Russians can visit the territory without a visa, but those who have been sanctioned over the Crimea annexation are barred from traveling.

Rogozin, who oversees Russia's aerospace, defense and Arctic industries, visited the island of Spitsbergen to inspect a Russian mining settlement on his way to the North Pole.

Norwegian Foreign Ministry spokesman Frode Andersen said that sanctioned Russian officials were "not wanted" in the area, and that Norwegian authorities were considering measures to reinforce entry bans, the Barents Observer reported over the weekend.

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