

Putin Vows to Retaliate After U.S. Senate Sanctions Vote

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Architect of the Capitol

The U.S. Senate on Thursday overwhelmingly passed a bill calling for tougher economic sanctions against Russia, in a move that President Vladimir Putin described as “illegal from the standpoint of international law,” the [Kommersant](#) newspaper reported.

The Senate voted on Thursday 98–2 in favor of the bill which also targets Iran and North Korea. It can be vetoed by President Donald Trump, whose administration has been embroiled in allegations of collusion with Russia since it came to the White House in January.

Speaking to reporters during an official visit to Finland on Thursday, Putin said that Moscow has not seen the final version of the sanctions bill and has yet to formulate an official response.

“We have seen that over some period of time, [the United States is] trying to provoke us,” Putin said. “Our diplomats were sent home, our diplomatic property was frozen. We are acting with restraint and patience. But at some point we will need to answer.”

Citing sources from Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kommersant reported on Thursday that if President Donald Trump were to sign the bill, 35 U.S. diplomats could be expelled from Russia in response.

The newspaper's sources said that Russia could also seize U.S. embassy property on the outskirts of Moscow if fresh sanctions are approved.

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On Tuesday, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 419-3 in favor of the bill, which both Russian and American officials see as initiating a new phase of confrontation between the two countries.

Following Tuesday's vote, Paul Ryan, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, labeled Russia one of the United States' "most dangerous adversaries."

Franz Klintsevich, Russia's deputy chairman of the Federation Council's committee for defense and security, told journalists on Wednesday that fresh sanctions could make joint U.S.-Russian efforts to solve international issues, like terrorism, "extremely difficult, if not impossible."

"The world could enter into a new Cold War," he [warned](#).

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