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U.S. Consulate Closures Are a 'Bluff,' Says Russian Foreign Ministry

August 14, 2017



Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova **Vyacheslav Prokofyev / TASS**

Washington has no legal grounds to close Russian consulates in the United States, Russia's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said Sunday evening on state news broadcast Rossia-1.

Russia's Kommersant newspaper reported on Friday that the White House is considering closing a Russian consulate in response to the Kremlin's ousting U.S. diplomatic staff from Russia and confiscating embassy property.

Russia currently has four consulates in the United States — one more than the Washington maintains in Russia.

Zakharova dismissed reports of the possible consulate closure as “a bluff" intended to impress "those who don’t understand the core of the issue.”

She said that several years ago Washington turned down Moscow’s offer to open a fourth consulate in Russia.

“The Americans were invited to open a fourth consulate on the territory of the Russian Federation, and they did not do it.”

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