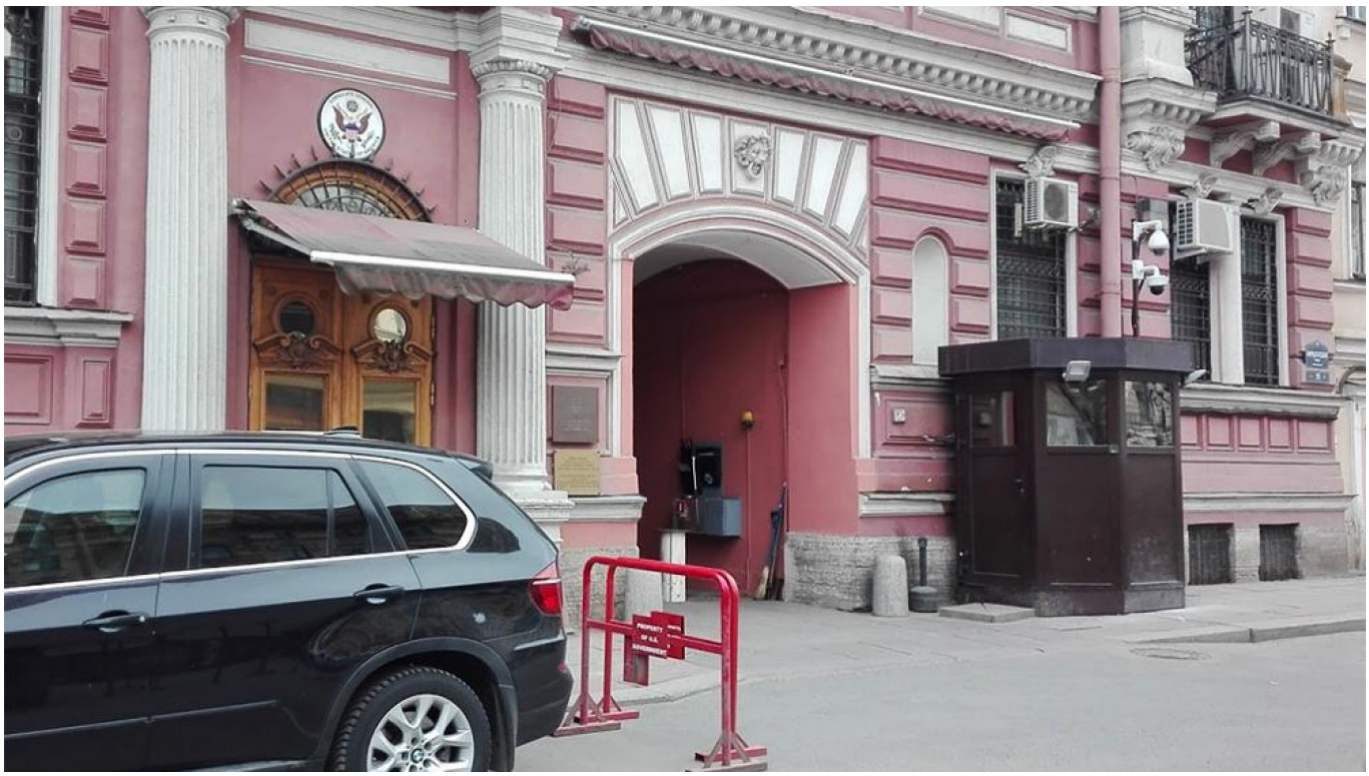
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U.S. Consulate Vandalized in St. Petersburg

August 29, 2017



U.S. Consulate General in St. Petersburg **Pavel Bon / Google Maps**

The U.S. Consulate in St. Petersburg was splashed with paint overnight, damaging the building's facade and a nearby vehicle, a law enforcement source told state-run RIA news agency Tuesday.

"Unknown [persons] driving past the U.S. Consulate General tonight threw a glass of paint at the building, then disappeared," the source said, adding that the vandals' identities are being established.

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Relations between the United States and Russia have deteriorated in recent months over Washington's allegations that Moscow interfered in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Then-President Barack Obama ordered the expulsion of 36 Russian diplomats, followed by

Russia last month ordering the U.S. to cut its staff to 455 diplomats by Sept. 1. The U.S. embassy announced it would suspend issuing non-immigrant visas to Russian citizens and resume processing exclusively in Moscow.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Monday Russia won't retaliate against the U.S. Embassy's restrictions on visas for Russian citizens, saying that would be tantamount to "genocide."

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