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Russian State Media Says U.S. Denied Visa to Russian Delegation to Attend UN Briefing

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A delegation from the Russian Defense Ministry General Staff was reportedly denied visas by U.S. authorities to attend a UN briefing in New York on Oct. 12, Russian state media reports.

Russia and the United States have been engaged in a diplomatic spat ever since Washington accused Moscow of interference in the 2016 presidential election. Both sides have engaged in the expulsion of diplomats and seizure of diplomatic properties.

The Russian military delegation would have included Lieutenant-General Andrei Tretyak, first deputy defense minister and advisor to the chief of staff, the state-run news agency RIA Novosti reported Thursday, citing ministry spokesperson Alexander Yemelyanov.

The delegation intended to take part in a Russian-Chinese briefing at the UN on the problems of U.S. anti-missile technology, RIA reported. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said

Moscow was "very concerned with the situation and considers it unacceptable."

Commenting on the news on Friday afternoon, U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Maria Olson said it went against protocol to "publicly discuss the issuing of visas to this or that individual," the Interfax news agency reports. "Nonetheless, I would like to emphasize that priority is given to officials intending to participating in bilateral talks at the UN, as required by international agreements and diplomatic practice," she was cited as saying.

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