

Russia Blasts 'Intellectually Impotent' British Minister in Aftermath of Ex-Spy's Poisoning

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The spokesperson for the Russian Defense Ministry, Major-General Igor Konashenkov **Maxim Zmeyev** / **Reuters**

Russia's Defense Ministry has hit back at its British colleague for telling Moscow to "shut up" in response to the expulsion of Russian diplomats over the poisoning of a former spy.

British Prime Minister Theresa May has given the 23 diplomats until next Wednesday to leave the country following the March 4 poisoning of double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter that London blames on Moscow. Britain's Defense Secretary Gavin Williamson made headlines on Thursday, telling Russia to "go away and shut up" after the expulsion of the diplomats.

Related article: [Russia to Expel UK Diplomats as Row Over Spy Attack Escalates](#)

"[Williamson's comment] perfectly characterizes the degree of his intellectual impotence," Russia's Defense Ministry spokesman Major-General Igor Konashenkov said in a statement [cited](#) by the RBC business portal Thursday.

"All this confirms not only the worthlessness of London's accusations against Russia that we have been hearing for the past few years, but also the total worthlessness of the 'accusers' themselves," he charged.

He went on to say that "boorish comments" were the only things left "in the arsenal of her majesty's armed forces."

Konashenkov is [known](#) for his colorful comments, which often invoke pop culture references, and has already sparred with Williamson earlier this year when he called the minister's warning about a Russian threat against British infrastructure worthy of a Monty Python sketch, *The Times* [reported](#).

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov seized on Konashenkov's observation, speculating that Williamson made the comments because he was "not educated enough."

"Perhaps he wants to make history with bold statements," Lavrov [said](#) in remarks during a press conference on Friday.

Meanwhile, the Russian Embassy in the U.K. [tweeted](#) that Williamson's "frankness [is] appreciated."

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