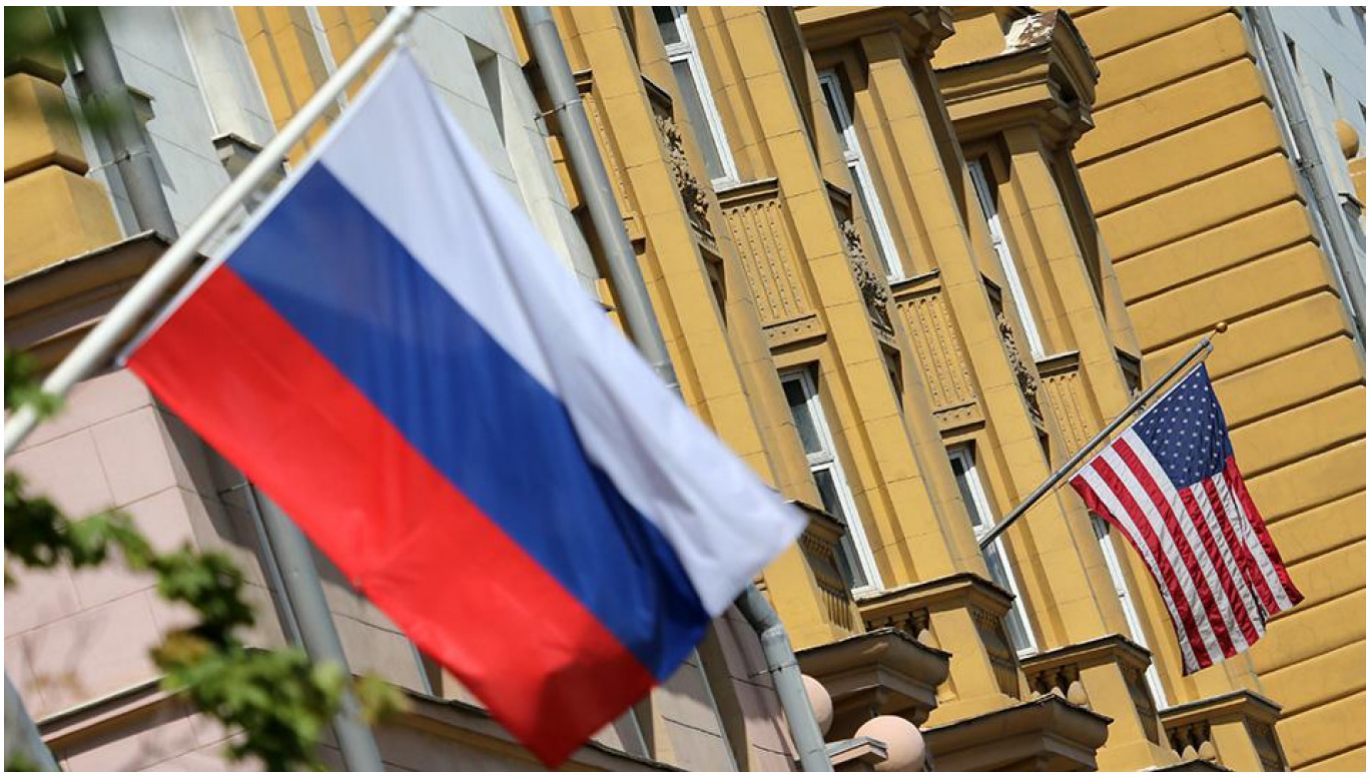
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Russian Officials React to Mass Expulsion of Diplomats From U.S. and EU

March 26, 2018



Anton Novoderzhkin / TASS

Russian officials and policymakers have blasted the coordinated expulsion of the country's diplomats from the United States and 14 members of the European Union over the poisoning of a former spy and his daughter in Britain.

Here's a collection of their responses:

— Senator Alexei Pushkov, Federation Council deputy:

"Judging by the latest U.S. steps, the potential to deteriorate relations with Russia is still far from exhausted. And the U.S. administration is working in this direction."

— Senator Konstantin Kosachev, the head of the Federation Council's International Affairs Committee:

"I suggest reading the news in this way: 'The U.S. has decided to expel 60 Russian diplomats

from the U.S. and to expel 60 American diplomats from Russia.'"

Related article: U.S. and EU Countries Expel Russian Diplomats in Coordinated Response to Ex-Spy's Poisoning

— Yury Shvytkin, Deputy Chairman of the State Duma's Defense Committee:

"In my view, they are pursuing a policy toward breaking diplomatic relations to a greater degree. This confrontation, let's say, does not benefit global stability. At the same time, the confrontation is a unilateral order from the U.S. and Britain."

— Alexei Chepa, deputy head of the Duma's Science and Technology Committee:

"This is collusion. The West is disappointed with these results, this support for Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin by the Russian public [in the March 18 presidential elections, where President Putin won 77 percent of the votes]."

— Russia's ambassador to Lithuania, Alexander Udaltsov:

"I asked if the Lithuanian side had evidence that these people were engaged in non-diplomatic activities. I didn't get an answer."

— Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

"The allies of Great Britain lack objective and exhaustive evidence and blindly follow the principle of Euro-Atlantic unity to the detriment of common sense, the norms of civilized international dialogue and the principles of international law."

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