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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S. Embassy in Moscow: 'We Reserve Right to Respond to Russian Retaliation'

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Chris Keane / Reuters

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow has warned it may respond to "Russian retaliation" amid a diplomatic row over the poisoning of a former double agent.

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday expelled 60 Russians and closed the Russian consulate in Seattle in response to the poisoning of former Russia spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter in the U.K. earlier this month. Russia said it will expel 60 U.S. diplomatic staff in turn.

"The United States took this action in response to Russia's attack on our closest ally, the United Kingdom, and its ongoing pattern of destabilizing activities in the United States and elsewhere," Embassy spokesperson Maria Olson told The Moscow Times. "We reserve the right to respond further to any Russian retaliation."

Embed:

> Заявление посла США в связи с высылкой сотрудников российских спецслужб (на английском): pic.twitter.com/FUAzfP0olg
>
> — Посольство США в РФ (@USEmbRu) March 26, 2018

Alongside the U.S. move, 14 EU member states announced they would expel Russian diplomats on Monday. "Additional measures, including further sanctions within the common EU framework, cannot be excluded in the coming days and weeks," European Council president Donald Tusk told reporters Monday.

Last year, the Kremlin ousted more than 400 U.S. diplomatic staff as part of a spat following Trump's decision to impose fresh sanctions on Russia over allegations of election meddling.

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