

Russia Angered by NASA's Revoked Invitation to U.S.

January 07, 2019



Valery Sharifulin / TASS

The U.S. decision to revoke an invitation for Russia's outspoken space chief to visit the country has outraged Russian lawmakers.

NASA administrator Jim Bridenstine has [rescinded](#) the invitation for his sanctioned Russian counterpart Dmitry Rogozin to visit the United States next month in an effort to "[be accommodating](#)" to U.S. senators who had opposed the invite. The U.S. space agency initially postponed Rogozin's visit but then [decided](#) it was "best to withdraw the invitation entirely" late last week as criticism mounted.

"It's strange for us that colleagues at NASA are communicating with us through the media, not directly," the state-run TASS news agency [quoted](#) a spokesman for the Roscosmos state space agency as saying Sunday.

The spokesman, Vladimir Ustimenko, added that the Russian agency is still waiting for

clarification from NASA representatives.

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The United States banned entry to and froze the assets of then-Deputy Prime Minister Rogozin, along with other officials it blames for Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula in March 2014. Rogozin oversaw Russia's powerful arms industry before he was appointed to head Roscosmos last year.

Senator Frants Klintsevich was [quoted](#) by the Associated Press as accusing the "U.S. political establishment" for not intending to "change its Russophobic vector."

State Duma deputy Yury Shvytkin called the quashed invite a "destructive step" that risks further souring U.S.-Russia relations, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#) Sunday.

Rogozin's canceled visit also threatens a possible joint Russian-American mission to Venus, said the head of the Russia Academy of Science's Space Research Institute, Lev Zelyony.

"Either the work continues, or this mission remains a study on paper," Zelyony was [quoted](#) by TASS as saying on Sunday.

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