

Russia Summons U.S. Envoy for ‘Harsh Talks’ on New Sanctions

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U.S. Ambassador to Moscow John Sullivan **Anton Novoderezhkin** / TASS

Updated at 11:50 a.m. April 16 to add Sullivan's statement.

Russia has summoned U.S. Ambassador to Moscow John Sullivan for “harsh talks” after Washington widened economic sanctions and ordered diplomatic expulsions in retaliation to what it calls Moscow’s malign behavior, Russia’s Foreign Ministry [announced](#) Thursday.

Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said the ministry would like to speak with Sullivan less than an hour after President Joe Biden ordered restrictions on U.S. banks buying new Russian government debt, sent home 10 diplomats who include alleged spies and sanctioned 32 people with alleged ties to 2020 election interference.

Related article: [U.S. Imposes Sanctions on Moscow, Expels 10 Russian Diplomats](#)

“The U.S. ambassador has been summoned to the Russian Foreign Ministry,” Interfax quoted

Zakharova as saying to reporters before vowing an “inevitable” retaliation.

“The conversation will be harsh for the American side.”

The back-to-back announcements come two days after Biden called his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin with an offer to hold a summit on neutral ground amid tensions over Russia’s troop buildup near Ukraine.

Zakharova reiterated at Thursday’s weekly briefing the Kremlin’s assertions that its military movements are non-threatening and placed the onus for deteriorating ties on the U.S.

“Washington must realize that it will have to pay a price for degrading bilateral relations. The responsibility for what is happening lies entirely on the United States,” she said.

“Such aggressive behavior will certainly receive a firm response and the retaliation to sanctions will be inevitable.”

In a statement late Thursday, Sullivan [said](#) he had informed Foreign Ministry officials of the measures the U.S. is taking “to hold the Russian government accountable for its adversarial actions.” He called the meeting “professional and respectful.”

Russian media reported Tuesday that the Kremlin had already summoned Sullivan to warn him about retaliation to the anticipated sanctions.

Russia’s Ambassador to the U.S. Anatoly Antonov has been in Moscow for nearly a month after being recalled following Biden’s televised remarks calling Putin a “killer.”

Antonov’s summoning for emergency talks on the future of U.S.-Russian relations was an unprecedented step in recent diplomatic history.

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