

U.S. Embassy Spokeswoman Expelled From Russia

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Rebecca Ross' expulsion is reportedly in retaliation for the U.S. not allowing Moscow to fill the vacancy for its embassy spokesperson in Washington. **Twitter / USEmbRuPress**

The spokeswoman for the U.S. Embassy in Moscow is among the 10 diplomats to be expelled from Russia in response to sanctions from Washington, the Kommersant business daily [reported](#) Wednesday.

Rebecca Ross and nine other American diplomats have until May 21 to leave the country in line with Russia's retaliation to the expulsion of 10 of its diplomats from the United States. The U.S. also sanctioned 32 individuals accused of interfering in the 2020 presidential election and expanded restrictions on U.S. banks trading in Russian government debt.

Ross [confirmed](#) to the state-run TASS news agency that she has been declared persona non grata.

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

“It’s not a Russian initiative,” Kommersant quoted an unnamed Russian Foreign Ministry source, who said that the U.S. has for the past six months not allowed Russia to fill its vacancy of a Russian Embassy spokesperson in Washington, as saying.

The source said the “extremely strange” rejection targets “an experienced diplomat who previously held similar posts in two other Russian embassies.”

“The United States simply returned the documents this person submitted for a visa without even commenting on the reason for their refusal,” Kommersant quoted the person as saying.

Amid the ongoing tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions, Russian President Vladimir Putin last month capped the number of Russian nationals allowed to work in the embassies of “unfriendly” countries.

The U.S., Moscow has indicated, is at the top of the “unfriendly” list.

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow said that, starting Wednesday, it will cut most visa services for Russians and eliminate non-emergency consular services for Americans due to the hiring ban.

Moscow became the only working U.S. diplomatic mission in Russia as the U.S. slashed operations at its consulates in Russia’s fourth-largest city of Yekaterinburg and the Far Eastern port of Vladivostok.

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