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Moscow Bans Over 900 Prominent Americans From Russia

By AFP

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Maksym Kozlenko (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Russia on Saturday published a list of 963 leading Americans, including U.S. President Joe Biden, Facebook boss Mark Zuckerberg and Hollywood actor Morgan Freeman banned from entering the country in retaliation for similar moves by Washington since the offensive in Ukraine.

Those named in the list on the Russian Foreign Ministry's website also include U.S. government officials, lawmakers and other leading figures.

Moscow had already announced sanctions targeting many of those on the list, in particular Biden, his Secretary of State Antony Blinken, the head of the Pentagon Lloyd Austin and Zuckerberg.

Freeman, who had not previously been named by Russian authorities, is accused by Moscow

of having recorded a video in 2017 in which he claimed Russia was plotting against the U.S.

"The Russian counter-sanctions are necessary and aim to constrain the U.S. which is trying to impose a neocolonial 'world order' on the rest of the planet... to change its position and recognize new geopolitical realities," the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

It added that Moscow remained open to "honest dialogue" and drew a distinction between the people of the US and the authorities "inciting Russophobia."

Since the offensive in Ukraine, Moscow has banned hundreds of "Anglo-Saxons" from Russia.

On Saturday, it said it had also banned 26 more Canadians, including Sophie Trudeau, the wife of the Canadian Prime Minister.

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