The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S., U.K. Embassies Ignore Forced Pro-War Change of Address

July 07, 2022



Sergey Sevostianov / TASS

British and American diplomats in Moscow will refuse to adopt new addresses for their embassies after officials renamed streets in honor of eastern Ukraine's pro-Kremlin separatist republics.

City authorities renamed the area close to the British Embassy on Monday, effectively changing the building's address to "1 Luhansk People's Republic Square."

The move comes less than two weeks after officials similarly altered the official address of the U.S. Embassy building to "1 Donetsk People's Republic Square."

British embassy staff said that they will not use the new address, state-run news agency RIA Novosti reported Thursday.

Diplomats reportedly told journalists that "the current address of the British Embassy in Moscow is listed on its official website," where it remains 10 Smolenskaya Naberezhnaya.

U.S. officials, meanwhile, have removed the embassy's former address — 8 Bolshoi Devyatinsky Lane — from its website, instead only referring to the building's location via its geographic coordinates.

London does not recognize the so-called Luhansk and Donetsk people's republics, the British embassy said in a statement this week.

"Renaming streets in Russia is the responsibility of local authorities, but it will certainly have no effect on the British government's position on Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine," the embassy's spokesperson said in a Telegram message.

Russia's postal service has said that no letters will reach the British embassy at its old address.

The formal changes to the U.S. and British embassies' addresses followed online votes on the Moscow City Hall-run platform.

Moscow councilors proposed the street name changes, which saw citizens asked to vote on their favorite name to honor the "defenders of Donbas."

The majority Russian-speaking region in southeastern Ukraine has been a major focus during the Kremlin's four-month invasion of the country, with Russian troops claiming they are "liberating" the area.

President Vladimir Putin officially recognized Donetsk and Luhansk as independent states days before launching his full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/07/07/us-uk-embassies-ignore-forced-pro-war-change-of-address-a78234