

Moscow Protests Western Bid to 'Recruit' Russian Diplomats

By [AFP](#)

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EPA / TASS

Moscow on Monday summoned the Dutch ambassador to "protest strongly" against Western efforts to "recruit" Russian diplomats in the Netherlands, the Foreign Ministry said.

Ambassador Gilles Beschoor Plug was called in to hear Moscow "protest strongly against an attempt to recruit the military attache of Russia's Embassy in The Hague on Oct. 20 by a representative of the British intelligence services," the ministry said.

"Such provocative actions are unacceptable... and hinder the normal operation of Russian establishments abroad," it added.

The ministry accused Western secret services of attempting several similar "provocations" against Russian diplomats over recent years in the Netherlands.

Representatives of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) made an approach "in a park" in

December 2018 to a Russian diplomat with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the ministry charged.

The following December, CIA agents tried at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport to "encourage" an attache from Russia's embassy to "cooperate," the statement said.

Moscow accused the Netherlands "of taking part" in "these illegitimate acts."

It listed another case in April when "members of Dutch special services tried to recruit three Russian diplomats who had earlier been declared personae non-gratae," ahead of their expulsion.

In July 2020, in The Hague, "surveillance equipment was discovered in the car of a (Russian) embassy diplomat, according to the statement.

Russia urged "Dutch authorities to refrain from these hostile acts which lead to a subsequent degradation in bilateral relations."

The Hague should take "comprehensive measures to prevent such incidents in the future," it said.

Russia's military offensive in Ukraine has led to a wave of international condemnation and sanctions backed by the expulsion of hundreds of Russian diplomats from Western nations, some accused of spying.

Moscow has responded by sending home dozens of Western diplomats.

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