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Moscow Expels ‘More Than 20’ German Diplomats

By AFP

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Sergei Karpukhin / TASS

The Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman on Saturday announced the expulsion of "more than 20" German diplomats as a retaliatory measure for the "mass expulsion" of Russian embassy staff from Berlin.

Maria Zakharova told state-run television Zvezda that Moscow had decided to expel "more than 20" diplomats.

Her statement came shortly after her ministry denounced "another mass expulsion of employees of Russian diplomatic missions in Germany."

The German Foreign Ministry said it took note of the Russian statements.

It told AFP that "the Federal government and the Russian side have been in contact in recent weeks on personnel matters in their respective representations abroad."

"Today's flight is part of that process," it said, though without specifically talking about any expulsion.

Moscow accused Berlin of "continuing to demonstratively destroy the entire range of Russia-Germany relations."

"As a response to Berlin's hostile actions, the Russian side has decided to mirror the decision and expel German diplomats from Russia," the Foreign Ministry said.

Moscow will also limit the maximum number of employees in German diplomatic missions in the country and said Germany's ambassador Geza Andreas von Geyr was notified of the measures on April 5.

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