

Russia Defends Finnish Embassy Bank Account Freeze

By [AFP](#)

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The Finnish Embassy in Moscow. **Pelagia Tikhonova / Moskva News Agency**

The Kremlin confirmed Thursday it had suspended the bank accounts of the Finnish embassy in Moscow as Moscow's ties with Europe deteriorate over the Ukraine conflict.

Finland's Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto this week said the bank accounts of his country's embassy in Moscow and consulate in St. Petersburg had been frozen at the end of April.

"This is not an initiative on the Russian side. We are reacting to a situation created by the authorities of a number of countries of the collective West, including — to our regret — Finland," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Related article: [Russia Freezes Finnish Embassy Bank Accounts – Finnish FM](#)

Haavisto had said that Finland had sought clarification from Russia and added that it had not

disrupted the banking operations of Russia's embassy in Helsinki.

"We cannot and will not leave unfriendly actions unanswered," Peskov said.

Haavisto said the Russian decision was likely related to EU sanctions linked to the conflict in Ukraine and that other EU countries have experienced similar problems with payment transactions in Russia.

The freeze coincided with the announcement by Finnish state-owned utility Fortum that control of its Russian subsidiary had been seized by Moscow, after President Vladimir Putin signed a presidential decree approving the takeover.

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