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Russia Bans Entry to 500 U.S. Nationals Including Obama

By AFP

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Kleponis Chris/CNP/ABACA

Russia on Friday said it banned entry to 500 Americans, including former president Barack Obama, in response to sanctions imposed by Washington.

"In response to the anti-Russian sanctions regularly imposed by the Biden administration... entry into the Russian Federation is closed for 500 Americans," the foreign ministry said, adding that Obama was among those on the list.

On Friday, the United States added hundreds more companies and individuals to its sanctions blacklist as it broadened efforts to choke off Russia's economy over the Ukraine offensive.

"Washington should have learned a long time ago that not a single hostile step against Russia will be left unanswered," the Foreign Ministry said.

Among those listed were television hosts Stephen Colbert, Jimmy Kimmel and Seth Meyers.

CNN anchor Erin Burnett and MSNBC presenters Rachel Maddow and Joe Scarborough were also included.

Russia said it blacklisted senators, congressmen and members of think tanks "involved in the spread of Russophobic attitudes and fakes" and the heads of companies that "supply weapons to Ukraine."

In the same statement, Russia said it had denied a consular visit to detained US journalist Evan Gershkovich, arrested in March on claims of spying.

The refusal was triggered by a refusal from Washington to issue visas to journalists traveling to the United Nations with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in April.

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