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Russia Closes Polish Consulate in Tit-for-Tat Move

July 14, 2023



The Polish consulate in Smolensk. **Olga Lisinova / TASS**

Russia will shutter Poland's consulate in the western Russian city of Smolensk to reach "parity" in diplomatic presence, Russia's government told Interfax on Friday.

The Polish consulate in Smolensk was opened in 2011 to expand contacts between Russian and Polish citizens and to develop bilateral relations.

A government decree published Friday orders Russia's Foreign Ministry to inform Warsaw of the decision to shutter the Smolensk consulate.

"The Russian government's order approved as a retaliatory measure allows for the restoration of parity of Russian consular institutions in Poland and Polish institutions in Russia," the cabinet's press service told Interfax.

Related article: Poland Seizes Russian High School Building in Warsaw

Moscow cited Poland's "unfriendly" seizure in April of a high school for the children of Russian diplomats in Warsaw for the closure.

Russia's Foreign Ministry threatened a "harsh reaction" to the move by Warsaw.

Poland said shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 that Polish courts had ruled to return the Russian high school building back to Warsaw City Hall.

Warsaw maintained that Poland and Russia had a disparity in the number of diplomatic buildings each had in the other country.

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