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Italy Summons Russian Envoy After ‘Verbal Attacks’ on President

By AFP

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Italy's Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani **AP/TASS**

Italy's Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said Thursday that he had summoned the Russian ambassador after the "umpteenth verbal attack" by Moscow's diplomatic corps against Italian President Sergio Mattarella.

"Strong condemnation of the umpteenth verbal attack against the President of the Republic, Sergio Mattarella. A man of peace and a symbol of national and European unity," Tajani wrote on X.

"That is why I have decided to summon the Russian ambassador to the Farnesina" building that houses the Italian Foreign Ministry.

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Tajani's comments came after Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova earlier on Thursday had accused Mattarella of spreading "lies" and "disinformation" after he denounced Moscow for threatening Europe with nuclear weapons.

Zakharova suggested that Mattarella had "confused" Russia with France, whose President Emmanuel Macron recently said that he would discuss extending France's nuclear deterrent to European partners.

The spokeswoman had also hit out at Mattarella a month ago after he drew comparisons between Russia and the Third Reich.

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