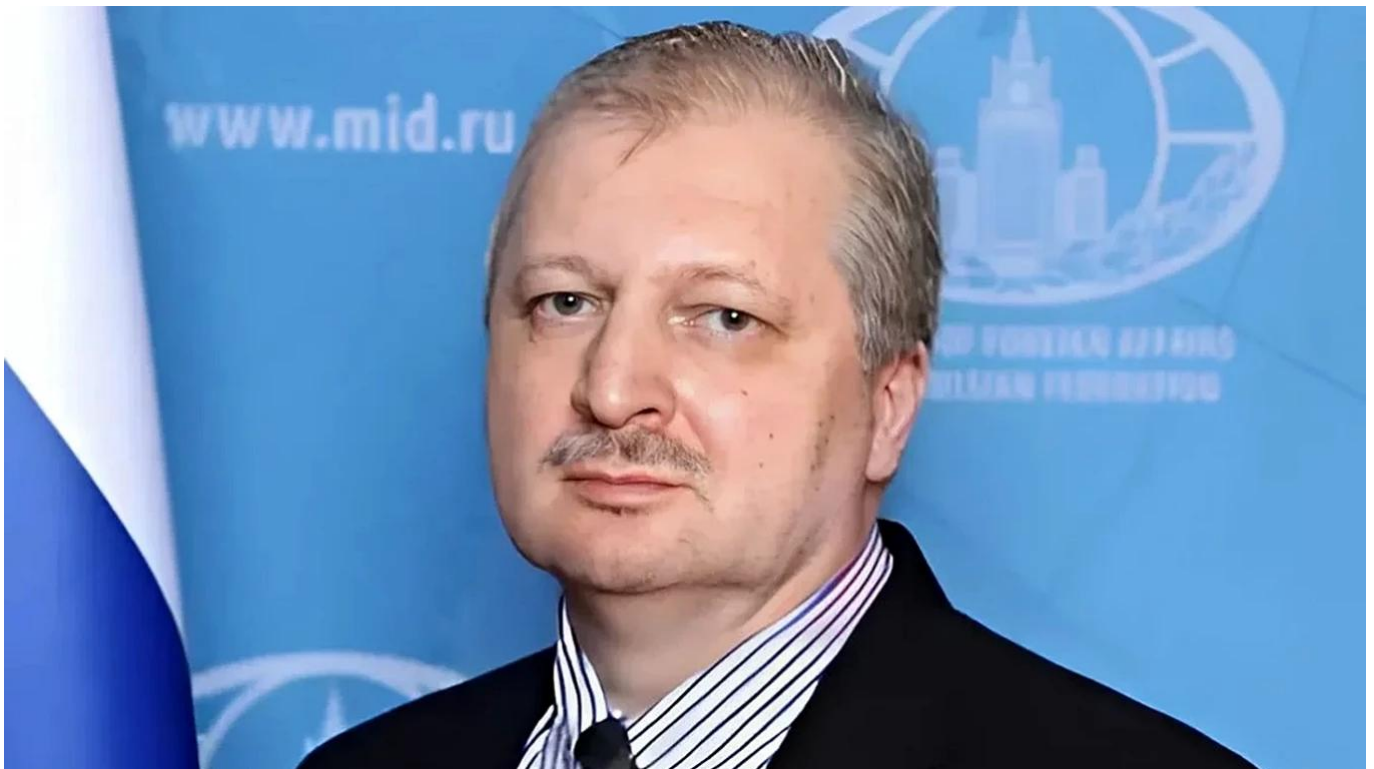


U.S.-Russia Embassy Talks Set for Thursday in Istanbul, Moscow Says

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Russian Ambassador to the United States Alexander Darchiyev. **Russian Foreign Ministry**

The second round of U.S.-Russia talks on restoring diplomatic missions will take place Thursday in Istanbul, the Kremlin [said](#) Tuesday.

“Our side will be represented by the Foreign Ministry, so wait for their announcement,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Russia’s Foreign Ministry [confirmed](#) the meeting, saying it will mark the second round of negotiations aimed at restoring embassy operations in both countries, according to the state-run TASS news agency.

Russia’s newly appointed ambassador to the United States, Alexander Darchiyev, and U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Russia and Central Europe Sonata Coulter will lead their respective delegations, the ministry said.

Darchiyev and Coulter [last met](#) in Istanbul on Feb. 27 to discuss normalizing the operations of

their diplomatic missions following years of tit-for-tat staff expulsions and strained relations.

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Later on Tuesday, the U.S. State Department confirmed the talks would go ahead in Istanbul, but emphasized that they would focus strictly on “stabilizing the operations of our bilateral missions.”

“There are no political or security issues on the agenda, and Ukraine is not — absolutely not — on the agenda,” State Department spokeswoman Tammy Bruce told reporters.

“These talks are solely focused on our embassy operations, not on normalizing a bilateral relationship,” she added.

The decision to launch the [embassy talks](#) came after Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio met in Saudi Arabia on Feb. 18 — the first high-level meeting between the two countries since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

U.S. President Donald Trump has pushed to reset relations with Moscow since taking office in January and has initiated several rounds of talks with Russian officials.

AFP contributed reporting.

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