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Russia Expels Romanian Military Attache in Tit-for-Tat Move

By AFP

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Romanian Embassy in Moscow. **Anton Kardashov / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that it was expelling Romania's military attache and his deputy in a retaliatory move against the country.

In March, Bucharest said it would expel two Russian diplomats over allegations of "interference" in the country's politics amid tensions over an annulled presidential election.

Romanian authorities threw out the results of the first round of last year's presidential vote after little-known NATO and EU critic Calin Georgescu unexpectedly topped the polls, sparking allegations that Russia had backed a major social media campaign in his favor.

Russia's Foreign Ministry said it had summoned Romania's charge d'affaires in Moscow and declared both the defense attache and his deputy at the Romanian diplomatic mission "persona non grata."

“The measure is a response to the Romanian side’s earlier unjustified decision to declare the military attache and his assistant at the Russian Embassy in Bucharest 'persona non grata,’” the ministry said in a statement.

Russia and Western countries have routinely expelled each other’s diplomats in recent years, often citing accusations of espionage and political interference.

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