

Spain, Russia Expel 2 Diplomats Each

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The  **Moscow Times**

MADRID — Spain said Tuesday that it expelled two Russian diplomats and that Russia had responded in kind in the latest mutual expulsions spurred by what a prominent Spanish newspaper said were spying accusations.

Two secretaries at the Russian Embassy in Madrid were "invited to leave about a month ago because they carried out activities incompatible with their status," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. "As is natural, Russia has taken reciprocal action."

Britain said last week that it had expelled a Russian diplomat for espionage and that Russia had responded in kind.

The Spanish expulsions were not made public at the time. El Pais newspaper reported that the two Russians had carried out economic espionage and that the director of Spain's National Intelligence Center requested the expulsions.

Spain considers the matter closed, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said. He declined to confirm the El Pais report.

Spain did not publicize the expulsions because it did not want to spoil an intense schedule of high-level official visits in 2011 for cultural programs, El Pais reported.

Russia will celebrate "Year of Spain" next year, while Spain will celebrate "Year of Russia."

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