

Russia Could Restrict U.S. Diplomats' Parking Rights in Consulate Retaliation

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Russia's Foreign Ministry building. [aktarian / Flickr \(CC BY-NC-ND 2.0\)](#)

Russia's Foreign Ministry is preparing a number of measures it may employ against U.S. diplomats in retaliation for the closure of consular properties in the United States, the *Kommersant* business daily [reports](#).

Speaking at a press conference in Jordan on Monday, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Russia would establish “what is called parity” in working conditions between Russian and U.S. diplomats.

The statement echoed an earlier comment made by President Vladimir Putin who said that Russia had the right to order the U.S. diplomatic mission to reduce its staff by an additional 155 people.

Russia in late July ordered the U.S. to limit its staff to 455 people after the country passed new sanctions on Moscow. The U.S. then ordered the closure of Russia's San Francisco consulate

and annexes in New York City and Washington D.C. in the spirit of “parity.”

“The United States said: ‘Russia wants parity, then let them close one of their four general consulates, because we only have three consulates in Russia,’ Lavrov said, adding: “If the U.S. insists on using parity as a criterion,” then Russia would reciprocate.

As well as ousting more American diplomats, one possible measure would be to limit the number of entry points for American diplomats into Russia, Kommersant reports.

Another would limit unrestricted travel. Entry and mid-level Russian diplomats working in the U.S. are allowed to travel within 40 kilometers of the embassy. Higher-level officials are allowed to travel freely in the U.S. and Russia. But there are more higher level U.S. diplomats in Russia, Kommersant claims, citing several diplomatic sources.

Finally, the U.S. diplomatic mission to Russia now enjoys special parking privileges, which Russian diplomats in the U.S. do not have, Kommersant said.

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