

Russia vows adequate response to US, EU over diplomats' expulsion



Moscow, March 27 (RHC)-- Moscow will give an adequate response to the decision by Washington and a number of Western countries to expel Russian diplomats, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told reporters on Tuesday.

"An adequate response will be given to all steps of the United States and the European Union, which we see," Zakharova said, according to Tass news agency.

The UK has not provided any information on the case of former Russian military intelligence Colonel Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia poisoned in Salisbury, Zakharova said. "We demand that the UK provide all available information on this case," the diplomat said.

"To date, Russia has received zero information on what happened." "Perhaps, this data is not being made public, because it includes nothing but political slogans," Zakharova noted.

On March 26, Washington announced its decision to expel 60 Russian diplomats, including 48 embassy staff and 12 members of Russia's Permanent Mission to the United Nations, demanding they leave the country within a week. Apart from that, it said Russia's Consulate General in Seattle would be closed.

In turn, Germany, Canada, Poland and France have decided to expel four diplomats each, Lithuania and the Czech Republic - three each, Australia, Albania, Denmark, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands - two each, Hungary, Latvia, Macedonia, Norway, Romania, Finland, Croatia, Sweden and Estonia - one each, while Ukraine decided to kick out 13 Russian diplomats.

The move was prompted by the incident involving the alleged poisoning of former Russian military intelligence officer Sergei Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, in Salisbury, the UK.

The Russian Foreign Ministry vowed that this unfriendly move would not be left unanswered.

On March 4, Skripal, 66, who had been convicted in Russia of spying for Great Britain and exchanged for Russian intelligence officers, and his daughter Yulia were found unconscious on a bench near the Maltings shopping center in Salisbury. Police said they had allegedly been exposed to a nerve agent. Both are in the hospital in critical condition.

London immediately accused Russia of being involved, but failed to produce any evidence. Russia has flatly rejected these allegations pointing out that neither the Soviet Union nor Russia had any programs to develop that substance.

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