

Trump administration orders 3 Russian diplomatic facilities closed

The Trump administration retaliated Thursday against Russia's expulsion of U.S. diplomats ordering closed the Russian consulate in San Francisco, a a chancery annex in Washington, D.C., embassy and consular annex in New York.

The closures will need to happen by Saturday, the State Department said. Spokeswoman Heather Nauert said the move brings the U.S. and Russia into "parity," with each having three consulates in each other's country.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered in July that 755 American diplomatic personnel leave Russia by this Friday. His move came days after Congress passed legislation strengthening financial sanctions on Moscow over its alleged meddling in the U.S. 2016 presidential election and support for separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

Department of State:

In spirit of parity, we require #Russia to close its consulate in SF, chancery annex in DC, and consular annex in NYC by Sep. 2.

Press Release Statement:

The United States has fully implemented the decision by the Government of the Russian Federation to reduce the size of our mission in Russia. We believe this action was unwarranted and detrimental to the overall relationship between our countries.

In the spirit of parity invoked by the Russians, we are requiring the Russian Government to close its Consulate General in San Francisco, a chancery annex in Washington, D.C., and a consular annex in New York City. These closures will need to be accomplished by September 2.

With this action both countries will remain with three consulates each. While there will continue to be a disparity in the number of diplomatic and consular annexes, we have chosen to allow the Russian Government to maintain some of its

annexes in an effort to arrest the downward spiral in our relationship.

The United States hopes that, having moved toward the Russian Federation's desire for parity, we can avoid further retaliatory actions by both sides and move forward to achieve the stated goal of both of our presidents: improved relations between our two countries and increased cooperation on areas of mutual concern. The United States is prepared to take further action as necessary and as warranted. ~end of statement

"The United States hopes that, having moved toward the Russian Federation's desire for parity, we can avoid further retaliatory actions by both sides and move forward to achieve the stated goal of both of our presidents: improved relations between our two countries and increased cooperation on areas of mutual concern," the State Department said in a statement. "The United States is prepared to take further action as necessary and as warranted."

Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/08/31/state-dept-russia-ordered-close-san-francisco-consulate-and-diplomatic-annexes-washington-new-york/620697001/>

[Disclaimer]