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## **GREECE RECALLS ENVOY FROM RUSSIA IN WORSENING SPAT**

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Vatican News (11 August 2018)

Greece has recalled its ambassador from Moscow in a worsening diplomatic dispute over alleged Russian interference in Greek foreign policy.

Exactly a month ago, Greece made the surprise move of expelling two Russian diplomats on the grounds that they tried to scuttle a recent cooperation deal between Greece and neighbouring Macedonia.

Since then the war of words between Athens and Moscow has been escalating, with tit-for-tax expulsions of Greek embassy staff from Moscow.

Media reports in Athens say Greece refused visas to a group of Russian Orthodox clergy who wanted to visit Mount Athos. The suspicion was that the priests might use their stay in northern Greece to stir up opposition to the Macedonia deal.

Until recently Greece was the EU member most accommodating with Russia thanks to the Orthodox link. The reasons for the sudden switch are still a matter of debate here in Athens.

But according to a source in the ruling left-wing Syriza party, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras has made a conscious decision to go along fully with American policy to stay on the right side of the United States and the European Union.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/world/news/2018-08/greece-recalls-russia-envoy.html>

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Kaynak/Source: