
RUSSIA EXPELS TWO GERMAN DIPLOMATS

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Moscow vowed retaliatory measures after Germany expelled two Russian diplomats over the killing in Berlin of a Georgian man. German prosecutors have said there is evidence the murder was carried out on Moscow's behalf.

The Russian Foreign Ministry on Thursday summoned the German ambassador to announce the expulsion of two diplomats. It comes a week after two Russian officials were told to leave Germany in connection with the murder of a former Chechen commander in Berlin.

"As a retaliatory measure, the Russian side has decided to declare two employees of the German embassy in Russia 'persona non grata'," the Russian foreign ministry said in a statement.

DW's Moscow correspondent Emily Sherwin noted that in comparison to the attempted killing of former Russian spy Sergei Skripal in the UK in 2018, where each country expelled 23 diplomats, "both sides are treading carefully."

The background to the story

Last week, the German government expelled two Russian diplomats, saying that Russia was not cooperating with an investigation into the killing of the Georgian citizen in August. He was shot in broad daylight in a park in the German capital's Moabit neighborhood.

The victim, 40-year-old Zelimkhan Khangoshvili, had reportedly worked for both Ukrainian and Russian interests after the Second Chechen War, which lasted from 1999 to 2009.

German federal prosecutors have said that there was "sufficient evidence" to indicate that the man's murder may have been carried on Moscow's behalf, something the Kremlin has vehemently denied.

es/rt (Reuters, dpa)