

Rossiya 1 Television Exclusive Interview with Vladimir Putin: Why Russia's response is sensitive to the US

Introduction: The staff of the American diplomatic mission in Russia is reduced by 755 people and will be the same as the personnel of the Russian diplomatic missions in America - 455 people on each side. American diplomats are deprived of the right to use several objects in Moscow.

In response to the rapid approval of the law on tightening anti-Russian sanctions in the Congress, Russia restores diplomatic parity. The decision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was authorized personally by Vladimir Putin.

Why such countermeasures were chosen and whether other steps to limit cooperation with the United States will follow them, the president told the leading VGTRK Vladimir Solovyov in preparation for a large project.

Why now? How far in time has this been reconciled and what further options do we have?

Putin: Why now? Because the American side has undertaken -- without provocation, which is very important -- a step in the deterioration of Russian-American relations: on illegal restrictions, on trying to influence other countries of the world, including its allies

who are interested in developing and maintaining relations with the Russian Federation.

We waited for quite some time that maybe something would change for the better, fueled such a hope that the situation would somehow change.

But, judging by everything, if it changes, it will not be soon. I'm not talking about any internal political reasons inside the United States itself.

But we must, I believe, show that we will not leave anything without an answer.

As for other possible measures, or whether it is a lot or not, from the point of view of the work of the diplomatic department this is quite sensitive.

Because more than a thousand employees - diplomats and technical workers - have worked, are still working in Russia, 755 will have to cease their activities in the Russian Federation. It's sensitive.

The question is whether or not we need to do more and what set we have. We have a small volume of trade and economic ties with the United States. It does not compare with the volume of trade relations, say, with China, with the countries of the European Union, with many other countries of the world. The possibilities are great, but due to various circumstances, the volume is small.

But there are very important areas of our interaction. This is also the area of limitation of weapons of mass destruction -- here we certainly play the leading violin along with the United States -- and the strengthening of this regime, the fight against terrorism. And, judging by what has been done recently, we will see how the situation will develop further, but recently, the creation of the southern zone of de-escalation in Syria is a concrete step, a concrete result of joint work. 'Not only in the interests of Syria, Russia, but also in the interests of Jordan, Israel, and therefore the United States, meaning that this is a region of interests of the United States. 'And Israel is one of the main allies of the United States. So we work and achieve results even now, even in this rather complicated situation.

We also have such a topic as combating illegal migration, with crime, in the broadest sense of the word organized. We finally have cybersecurity issues.

We, as I have already said about this, have repeatedly suggested to the American side to establish cooperation with each other in order to secure their interests, both ours and the US. And in general throughout the world to put such negative activities under control such as cybercrime. Instead of beginning to work constructively, we only hear groundless accusations of interference in the internal affairs of the United States.

But we have other spheres, even in the same economy. For example, in the energy sector. Our companies cooperate, by the way, for a long time, and have very good prospects for the development of relations. In our sphere of aviation, in the field of space exploration, there is good work in a large enough volume and the same good prospects.

I'm not talking about the launches of American missiles, which are carried out on our engines, not to mention the international space program. But, let's say, we have good plans for work in deep space. For example, both our and American scientists are interested in the possibility of working together to study Venus.

Business not only in business -- business in a multifaceted cooperation on very many directions. And we have, of course, what to say and limit such areas of our joint activity that will be sensitive to the American side. But I think that it is not necessary to do this. This will also harm the development of international relations. And it will not only damage Russian-American relations as such, but we will also suffer some damage.

One can imagine, theoretically, that sometime there may come a time when the damage from attempts to pressure Russia will be comparable to those negative consequences that are related to certain limitations of our cooperation. Well, if such a moment once comes,

then we can consider other options for answers. But I hope that it will not come to this.