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Russia Will Bar Some U.S. Citizens in Retaliation

By ELLEN BARRY

MOSCOW — Russia's Foreign Ministry announced Saturday that it confirmed a list of American citizens it will bar from entering Russia, in a retaliatory move against the United States' adoption of the so-called Magnitsky list, [which imposes sanctions on Russian officials](#) who have been linked to the 2009 death of the whistleblower Sergei L. Magnitsky.

Russia's new list includes United States officials who have been implicated in crimes against Russian citizens as well as other violations of human rights, said a spokesman, Aleksandr K. Lukashevich, in comments released Saturday. Mr. Lukashevich mentioned the torture of detainees, extralegal detention at Guantánamo Bay, and the killing of civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan as possible focuses.

His remarks underlined the uncertainty that lies ahead for the reset in relations between the United States and Russia, with political shifts under way in both countries and doubts arising about one of Russia's goals, its accession to the W.T.O.

"The matter is not finished — if the U.S. chooses the path of visa confrontation, we will have to enlarge this list," Mr. Lukashevich said. "This is not our choice. We want an honest and respectful dialogue and stronger interaction in all areas, including the visa field. It would be unacceptable if political games involving blacklists of Russians cancels out the positive dynamism that has lately existed in Russian-U.S. relations."

Three months ago, the Obama administration announced that dozens of Russian officials had been quietly barred from the United States over Mr. Magnitsky's death — one of its sharpest policy responses to Russian human rights abuses. Though the State Department has put in place a visa ban over the Magnitsky case, a bipartisan group of senators has been seeking far more stringent measures, which would include freezing the officials' American assets.

Mr. Magnitsky, 37, worked as a tax adviser to Hermitage Capital, an international investment company that was in a bitter dispute with Russian law enforcement authorities.

Mr. Magnitsky testified in court that senior police officials had stolen documents from the

company and used them to fraudulently claim \$230 million in tax refunds. Arrested by some of the same officials he had accused, Mr. Magnitsky was held in pre-trial detention for 11 months and repeatedly denied medical care. The authorities pledged a thorough investigation, but only two prison doctors have been charged with wrongdoing.

Mr. Lukashevich on Saturday sharply condemned the State Department's decision, as well as "the ongoing campaign in the U.S. regarding Magnitsky's tragic death."

"In its essence we are talking about an attempt to put direct pressure on our government institutions, which has nothing to do with concern for human rights or a desire to find out all the circumstances of the event," he said. "This kind of moralizing approach looks especially cynical against the background of actual legalization of torture at U.S. special prisons, abductions and abuses of terror suspects, the indefinite holding of detainees at Guantánamo prison, and uninvestigated killings of civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan."



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