

Putin's Response to Obama's Sanctions: "I Wish all of you Happiness and Prosperity, Season's Greetings to President Obama and President-elect Donald Trump and the American People"

By [Pres. Vladimir Putin](#)

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The intent of Obama's sanctions against Russia, requiring 35 Russian diplomats to leave the US within 72 hours, was to trigger retaliation on the part of the Kremlin.

The Russian president however responded with courtesy, conveying Russia's best wishes for the New Year to both the president and people of the United States. Below is Putin's official response:

We regard the recent unfriendly steps taken by the outgoing US administration as provocative and aimed at further weakening the Russia-US relationship. This runs contrary to the fundamental interests of both the Russian and American people. Considering the global security responsibilities of Russia and the United States, this is also damaging to international relations as a whole.

As it proceeds from international practice, Russia has reasons to respond in kind. Although we have the right to retaliate, we will not resort to irresponsible 'kitchen' diplomacy but will plan our further steps to restore Russian-US relations based on the policies of the Trump Administration.

The diplomats who are returning to Russia will spend the New Year's holidays with their families and friends. We will not create any problems for US diplomats. We will not expel anyone. We will not prevent their families and children from using their traditional leisure sites during the New Year's holidays. Moreover, I invite all children of US diplomats accredited in Russia to the New Year and Christmas children's parties in the Kremlin.

It is regrettable that the Obama Administration is ending its term in this manner. Nevertheless, I offer my New Year greetings to President Obama and his family.

My season's greetings also to President-elect Donald Trump and the American people.

I wish all of you happiness and prosperity.

Cryptic response from [London's Guardian](#): pertaining to the children of US diplomats:

Instead of playing the Grinch, Putin had taken on the role of Ded Moroz, Russia's answer to Father Christmas. One Russian MP on Vesti TV said Obama

was Bad Santa.

It was also a subtle reminder, for those who were able to decode it, that the FSB – the KGB's successor – has precise information about the children of US embassy personnel. Russia's foreign ministry on Friday tartly denied reports that Moscow was to close the Anglo-American school, attended by diplomatic kids, and the offspring of bankers and oil workers.

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