

# *Russia Blacklists Five U.S. Officials Over Rights Abuses*

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Moscow, February 3 (RHC)-- Russia has imposed a travel ban on five former law-enforcement officials from the United States as a retaliatory measure against Washington for a similar action.

The United States on Monday blacklisted four Russian officials and a Ukrainian it accuses of human rights abuses, involving the 2009 death in prison of a Russian lawyer.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that it had sanctioned five former U.S. officials, including former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, citing their alleged role in the “legalization and use of torture and indefinite detentions.”

“We must remind that it was the United States that officially legalized and actively used medieval torture in the beginning of the 21st century,” the ministry said in a statement.

“We are talking about a policy that has allowed the keeping of Russian citizen [Ravil] Mingazov in Guantanamo prison without a trial for over 13 years,” the statement added.

It also said that Washington should address its “police violence with racial undertones and a penitentiary system that is far from perfect.”

Besides Gonzales, Moscow also imposed a travel ban on former US undersecretary of defense, Douglas Feith, CIA lawyer John Rizzo, former assistant attorney general, Jay Scott Bybee and former general counsel of the department of defense, William James Haynes II.

The ministry said the blacklisted Americans would be banned from entering Russia “as a response to Washington’s anti-Russian policy.”

Relations between the U.S. and Russia have slipped to their lowest level since the Cold War over the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria. The U.S. and EU have imposed several rounds of economic sanctions against Russia over the conflict in Ukraine since early 2014.

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