

RELEASE IN FULL

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Subject: Fw: Belarus expels Sweden's ambassador (AP)

From: OpsNewsTicker@state.gov [mailto:OpsNewsTicker@state.gov]
Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 09:44 AM
To: NEWS-Mahogany
Subject: Belarus expels Sweden's ambassador (AP)

STOCKHOLM (AP) - Sweden's foreign minister says Belarus has expelled its ambassador 'for being too supportive of human rights.'

Carl Bildt says Sweden in turn has decided that the incoming Belarusian ambassador to Sweden won't be welcome. He also says two Belarusian diplomats have been asked to leave the Nordic country.

Bildt, who spoke to reporters August 3, says Belarus' authoritarian government, headed by President Alexander Lukashenko, got upset because the Swedish ambassador had met with the opposition in Minsk.

The expulsion also comes weeks after a pair of Swedish activists used a light plane to drop hundreds of teddy bears bearing messages supportive of human rights into Belarusian territory.

Lukashenko fired two generals over the incident. Bildt, however, said there was no word that the teddy bear dropped was linked to the expulsion.

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