

Flights Between Minsk and Moscow Halted Over Dispute

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Flights between Moscow and Belarus' capital Minsk were temporarily halted Monday morning amidst an apparent dispute between aviation authorities of the two countries, RIA-Novosti reported.

Early Monday, Russian aviation authorities withdrew flight permission to Moscow from Belarus' national carrier Belavia, preventing a 7 a.m. flight from Minsk to Moscow from taking off. Belarus responded in kind, revoking permission for Russian carriers to fly to Minsk.

Aeroflot confirmed the suspension, Bloomberg reported.

The Russian state carrier received notification from the aviation authority to halt flights as of Monday, Aeroflot spokeswoman Irina Dannenberg said. The carrier has three flights a day to Minsk.

Discussions by the two sides Monday morning resulted in a temporary agreement for flights to continue until Thursday. A spokesperson for Belarus' transportation ministry said authorities plan to hold negotiations on Thursday over areas of disagreement.

Belavia general director Anatoly Gusarov told Interfax that the initiative to cease flights came from Russia, likely as a tactic intended to pressure Belarus into allowing more flights between the two countries' capital cities.

Belavia and Russian airlines had agreed to have four flights in each direction between Minsk and Moscow per day, but "Russian companies demanded a larger number of flights for themselves," Gusarov said. "That position of the Russian side led to the unprecedented step of withdrawing permission for Belavia flights to Moscow."

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