

Russian Foreign Ministry Accuses Kiev of Detaining Embassy Employees

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Protesters erect a placard as they gather near the Russian Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine.

In a sign of escalating tensions between Russia and Ukraine, Russia's Foreign Ministry on Friday accused Kiev of targeting its diplomats by detaining embassy employees.

Calling on Ukrainian authorities to "stop provocations against Russian diplomatic institutions in Ukraine and against Russian diplomats," the ministry said in an online statement that an unspecified number of embassy personnel had been detained on Thursday.

"Kiev has committed the latest outrageous act against security personnel of the Russian Embassy, including the ambassador's personal security guard. Despite presenting their diplomatic passports, they were detained upon exiting a cafe under a false pretext: they supposedly were in possession of grenades," the statement read.

The ministry called on authorities in Kiev to immediately release the embassy's employees and to cease such "violations of international conventions on diplomatic immunity."

Kiev has not commented on the incident.

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