

Ankara Warns Moscow After Rocket-Brandishing Photos Go Viral

December 08, 2015



The Russian Defense Ministry has not issued a comment, Lenta.ru wrote.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry has called on Moscow to “steer clear of provocations” after Turkish media broadcast images of a serviceman on the deck of a Russian warship apparently brandishing a rocket launcher as the vessel passed through Turkish waters, the Lenta.ru website reported Monday.

Russian Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Karlov was called in to the ministry to explain the incident earlier that day, the article said quoting a spokesman for the embassy.

On Sunday, the Turkish NTV channel and Hurriyet Daily News newspaper started showing photographs of a serviceman appearing to hold a rocket launcher on his shoulder as the Russian landing ship Caesar Kunikov passed through the Bosphorus Strait the day before.

“For a Russian soldier to display a rocket launcher or something similar while passing on a Russian warship is a provocation,” Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told reporters, according to a Reuters article published Sunday.

The Russian Defense Ministry has not issued a comment, Lenta.ru wrote.

According to a World War I treaty, Turkey is obliged to allow all civilian ships to pass through the Bosphorus Strait during peacetime. The waterway, considered the busiest on the planet, provides the Russian Black Sea fleet with its only passage to the world's oceans.

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