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Russia Reacts to Istanbul Terror Attack

By The Moscow Times

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Ukrainian Citizen Dead, Russian Amongst Wounded

So far, 43 people have died and as many as 150 have been injured after three suicide bombers attacked Istanbul's Ataturk airport with automatic weapons and explosives on Tuesday night, the TASS news agency reported.

A Ukrainian woman is amongst the dead, the RBC newspaper reported Wednesday.

Russia's consulate in Istanbul has named Russian citizen Alexander Lubnin amongst the injured.

Flights Suspended

Russian airline Aeroflot has suspended flights between Moscow and Istanbul until Thursday, the RIA Novosti news outlet reported Wednesday.

Moscow's Sheremetyevo and Vnukovo airports have cancelled flights between the two cities.

An Aeroflot flight from Moscow to Istanbul was forced to turn back to the city's Sheremetyevo airport Tuesday evening, the Interfax news agency reported.

Flights to and from Istanbul from Moscow's Domodedovo airport with Turkish airline Pegasus are due to run on Wednesday as scheduled, according to Domodedovo's website.

Russian Schoolgirls Stranded

Fifteen schoolgirls from the Russian region of Tatarstan are stranded in Istanbul after traveling as part of a dance group to a competition in Bulgaria.

"They have run out of money and cannot fly home," said a Russian official, who stressed that the girls were safe and staying in a hotel.

"We are doing everything in our power to help the children and we have involved the consulate and authorities of Tatarstan," he added.

Attacks a 'Warning Against Cooperation With Russia'

Konstantin Kosachev, a deputy on Russia's Foreign Affairs Council, said that the attacks clearly related to Turkey's attempts to normalize relations with Russia and Israel.

"They [the terrorists] are warning Turkey not to take part in the united front against terrorism, formed principally thanks to Russian diplomacy," Kosachev said on social media.

"The attacks will not drive Russia and Turkey apart but will unite us. In spite of everything, we stand together with the Turkish people," he said.

Government Reaction

Russian President Vladimir Putin condemned the attacks and expressed his condolences to the Turkish people. "We deplore yesterday's attacks and we feel for the victims," he said.

Sergey Naryshkin, chairman of the State Duma, called on global powers to unite against terrorism, RIA Novosti reported. "This convinces us of the need to unite the the forces of the civilized world in the fight against this great evil," Naryshkin said.

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