

Kremlin Rules Out Deploying Security 'Reserve' in Belarus, for Now

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Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko is facing some of the biggest demonstrations in his 26-year rule of the country. **Yury Kochetkov / EPA / TASS**

Belarus has no need for Russia's troops for the time being, the Kremlin [said](#) Monday after President Vladimir Putin announced the creation of a Russian "reserve" ready for deployment in case of mass unrest in the neighboring state.

"The use of this reserve is out of the question at the moment," Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters during a daily briefing, according to the *Kommersant* newspaper.

Putin, when announcing the creation of the reserve last week, said he would not send it to ex-Soviet Belarus unless "extremists in Belarus cross a line and start plundering."

"We see that the situation is under control and so there's no point in talking about it now," Peskov said Monday.

Related article: [Putin Forms Law Enforcement ‘Reserve’ on Standby for Belarus](#)

EU leaders were quick to seize on Putin’s words late last week, with French President Emmanuel Macron calling a would-be Russian intervention in Belarus “the worst thing.”

EU foreign affairs high representative Josep Borrell urged Russia to abide by its own “mantra” that the crisis in Belarus is a domestic affair that does not need foreign interference.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has faced some of the biggest demonstrations in his 26-year rule of the country after a disputed election he claims to have won in a landslide.

Lukashenko, who has been filmed brandishing automatic weapons during the rallies, has in recent days ordered war games, increased border security and deployed troops in major cities in a show of force for protesters and foreign powers.

Putin and Lukashenko agreed to meet in their latest phone call on Lukashenko’s 66th birthday Sunday. The Kremlin said the two will meet sometime in the next two weeks.

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