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Russia Demands EU Apology Over Vaccine 'Roulette' Jab

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The Sputnik V Twitter account said the comments "raise serious questions about possible political interference in the ongoing EMA review." **Christof Stache / AFP**

Russia is demanding a public apology from the European Union's medicines regulator for comparing its Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine to "Russian roulette."

Christa Wirthumer-Hoche, management board chairwoman of the Amsterdam-based European Medicines Agency (EMA), made the errant remark Monday while advising EU members against emergency use authorization of Sputnik V.

Related article: EU Medical Official Warns of Sputnik Jab 'Russian Roulette'

"Such comments are inappropriate and undermine credibility of EMA and its review process," said the official Twitter account promoting Sputnik V.

The EMA launched a rolling review of the Russian vaccine last week as Hungary began using it

while Slovakia and Czechia signaled they would bypass EMA approval.

The Sputnik V account said Wirthumer-Hoche's comments on Austrian television "raise serious questions about possible political interference in the ongoing EMA review" and "undermine credibility" of the nearly 50 countries' regulators that have already approved the jab.

"Vaccines and EMA should be above and beyond politics."

Russia has said it was ready to provide enough Sputnik V doses for 50 million Europeans as soon as it gets the green light as the first non-Western vaccine.

The scandal comes as the United States accused Russian intelligence of running a disinformation campaign against U.S.-made Covid-19 vaccines in an apparent bid to boost Sputnik V's image.

Russian officials did not appear to respond to the accusations as of early Tuesday.

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