

Russia to Partially Evacuate Kabul Embassy Staff After Taliban Takeover

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Embassy of Russia in Afghanistan / facebook

Russia plans to partially evacuate staff from its embassy in Kabul following the Taliban's swift takeover of the Afghan capital, a Foreign Ministry official [said](#) Monday.

The United States military evacuated its embassy staff and other foreigners Sunday as the insurgent group's forces entered Kabul and the Afghan government collapsed. At least three people have been [killed](#) in the chaos that unfolded at Kabul's airport Sunday as thousands of desperate Afghans tried to flee the city.

Russia's ambassador to Kabul Dmitry Zhirnov plans to meet with Taliban members Tuesday to discuss security measures for the Russian diplomats who remain at their postings, Foreign Ministry official and presidential envoy to Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov told the Ekho Moskvyy radio station.

"We have a relatively large embassy in Afghanistan, it's about 100 people altogether. Some of our employees will be sent on vacation or evacuated in some other way so as not to create too

much of a presence," Kabulov said.

The militant group has already set up a perimeter around the Russian embassy, Kabulov added.

Kabulov's latest statement comes a day after he said Russia had no plans to evacuate its Kabul embassy.

The official on Monday also said that Moscow will decide on recognizing the new Taliban government based "on the conduct of the new authorities."

"We will carefully see how responsibly they govern the country in the near future. And based on the results, the Russian leadership will draw the necessary conclusions," Kabulov said.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova criticized the United States for not evacuating Afghan citizens despite Washington's frequent condemnation of human rights abuses.

"They [the U.S.] usually print statements on individual [human rights] cases around the clock, without a lunch break. ... Afghans are storming planes and asking Washington — which for so many years has given assurances of their alliance — not for help, but for salvation. And silence," Zakharova [wrote](#) on her Telegram channel.

In recent years, Russia has sought to reach out to the Taliban and has hosted Taliban representatives in Moscow several times, most recently last month.

Moscow is closely watching for a potential spillover of the instability into neighboring ex-Soviet Central Asian countries where Russia maintains military bases.

AFP contributed reporting.

The Taliban is a terrorist organization banned in Russia.

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