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Moldova Expels Russian Diplomat Over Ukraine Missile Debris

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Moldova has expelled a Russian diplomat after debris from a Russian missile shot down by Ukrainian air defenses landed on the northern tip of the country's territory.

Ukraine said it was subjected to a "massive" wave of missile strikes Monday, with more than 50 cruise missiles launched at targets across the country including Kyiv's power and water supplies.

The Moldovan interior ministry said one of those missiles fell on the village of Naslavcea close to the Moldovan-Ukrainian border on Monday, blowing out several houses' windows but not causing any injuries.

Moldovan Foreign Minister Nicu Popescu announced the expulsion of a Russian diplomat in protest of Moscow's "intensified attacks" on Ukraine.

These "are having severe spillover effects on Moldova, threatening our energy and human

security," Popescu wrote on Twitter.

Russia's Ambassador to Chisinau, Oleg Vasnetsov, was summoned to the foreign ministry on Monday "and notified of our decision to declare a Russian diplomat persona non grata," Popescu added without identifying the expelled diplomat.

Embed:

> Russia's intensified attacks on Ukraine are having severe spillover effects on Moldova, threatening our energy and human security.
>
> Russia's ambassador was summoned earlier today and notified of our decision to declare a Russian diplomat persona non grata.
>
> — Nicu Popescu (@nicupopescu) October 31, 2022

Russia's Foreign Ministry said it would not leave the expulsion of its diplomat unanswered, according to state-run Russian news agencies.

The falling of missile debris on Moldova is the latest spillover from the war in Ukraine into the former Soviet country, which like its neighbor has a pro-Western government.

Moldova said on Oct. 10 that Russian cruise missiles targeting Ukraine had crossed its airspace and summoned Ambassador Vasnetsov to demand an explanation.

Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees have fled to Moldova since Russia sent troops into Ukraine in February.

The European Union granted Moldova, along with Ukraine, candidate status in a show of support in the face of Russia's offensive.

Moldova has a small breakaway region, Transnistria, which is armed and supported by Russia. Several attacks in Transnistria over the summer have raised fears of the Ukraine war spreading to Moldova.

AFP contributed reporting.

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