

Tribunals to Prosecute Russia for Ukraine War Would Lack 'Legitimacy,' Kremlin Says

December 01, 2022



Putin's Spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency**

Any tribunal established to prosecute alleged Russian war crimes during its invasion of Ukraine would lack “legitimacy” and would not be recognized by Moscow, the Kremlin [said](#) Thursday.

"As for attempts to establish some kind of tribunals, they will not have any legitimacy, will not be accepted by us and will be condemned by us," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

The comments come a day after European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen [proposed](#) setting up a specialized court to prosecute Russia's actions in Ukraine.

The Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC) [opened](#) its own investigation into alleged Russian crimes following the Kremlin's Feb. 24 invasion, but the ICC does not have

jurisdiction to prosecute aggression in Ukraine.

"While continuing to support the International Criminal Court, we are proposing to set up a specialized court, backed by the United Nations, to investigate and prosecute Russia's crime of aggression," von der Leyen said.

Von der Leyen instead proposed to have a court set up in an EU country that could tackle Russia specifically on the crime of aggression while leaving war crimes and crimes against humanity to the ICC.

The Netherlands, which already hosts the ICC in The Hague, has indicated its willingness to establish the mooted new court on its territory.

"It is our task, as the international community, to make sure that we do justice," Dutch Foreign Minister Wopke Hoekstra told journalists in Romania, as he attended a NATO meeting.

Russia's forces have been accused of torturing and killing civilians in Ukraine. Moscow has repeatedly denied the accusations and claimed it is only targeting military infrastructure in Ukraine.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:

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