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Russia Says U.S. Aided Alleged Ukraine Drone Attacks

By AFP

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Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov in Geneva. **Martial Trezzini / Keystone via AP / TASS**

Russia's deputy foreign minister said Thursday that drone attacks which Kyiv is alleged to have carried out on Russian military bases would only have been possible with U.S. assistance.

Sergei Ryabkov, who is in Geneva to address the UN Human Rights Council and the Conference on Disarmament session, said Washington must have provided intelligence and targeting information.

"Some time ago, Kyiv undertook UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) attacks on facilities that provide bases for our long-range aviation in Saratov region and also in Ryazan region," he told a press conference.

"We know that those attacks would never be possible in the absence of a very deep and sophisticated assistance by the United States to the Ukrainian military, including targeting, of

course, intelligence provision and also some technical assistance of other sorts."

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In early December, the Russian Defense Ministry said Ukrainian drone attacks caused explosions at two airfields leaving three dead.

One of them is the Engels airbase, in the southern Saratov region located more than 600 kilometers (370 miles) from the border with Ukraine, where some of Russia's strategic nuclear bombers are kept.

The airfields were targeted with Soviet-made drones, the ministry said at the time.

The United States said on Dec. 6 that it had not "enabled" Ukraine to carry out strikes inside Russia, after a spate of drone attacks on military-linked facilities deep within Russian territory.

Ukraine has never said whether or not it had deployed drones against Russian territory.

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