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Moscow 'Regrets' Finland's Move to Consider Closing Border With Russia

By AFP

November 15, 2023



Cars at the Russian-Finnish border. **Lauri Heino / IMAGO / TASS**

Russia said Wednesday that it "deeply regretted" Finland's move to consider closing its border crossings with Russia amid an uptick in asylum seekers from the Middle East and Africa entering the country.

Helsinki on Tuesday accused Moscow of deliberately allowing migrants to enter Finland without having proper travel documents, suggesting it was a tactic to destabilize the country.

"We deeply regret that the Finnish leadership has chosen to deliberately move away from what used to be good relations," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Wednesday when asked about Finland's comments.

Finland's relations with Russia have deteriorated significantly after the Nordic country, which shares a 1,300-kilometer border with its eastern neighbor, was accepted into NATO in April

over security threats following Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine.

Related article: Finland Weighs Closing Russian Border Amid Uptick in Asylum Seekers

Moscow has warned that it would take unspecified "countermeasures" against Finland joining the U.S.-led military alliance.

Finland’s border guard authority said Tuesday that around 60 asylum seekers had arrived from Russia since early Monday — compared with 91 people over the past three months.

The Nordic country of 5.5 million people is in the process of erecting a 200-kilometer fence on a section of its border with Russia, and construction on the fence is expected to be completed by 2026.

At present, Finland's borders are secured primarily by light wooden fences, which are mainly designed to stop livestock from wandering astray.

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