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Moscow Summons French Ambassador Over 'Growing' Role in Ukraine

By AFP

January 19, 2024

France's Ambassador to Russia Pierre Levy. **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

Russia on Friday summoned France's ambassador in Moscow and issued a formal complaint over his country's alleged "growing involvement" in the war in Ukraine.

The move comes just days after Moscow claimed, without providing evidence, that it had killed a group of French mercenaries in a strike on the northeastern city of Kharkiv.

"On 19 January, French Ambassador P. Levy was summoned to the Russian Foreign Ministry and presented with evidence of Paris's growing involvement in the conflict over Ukraine," Russia's Foreign Ministry announced in a statement.

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Moscow said dozens of fighters were killed in the Tuesday attack in Kharkiv, which Russian

forces have shelled regularly since February 2022.

Kyiv said more than a dozen civilians were wounded in the attack and that residential buildings were damaged.

France's Foreign Ministry on Thursday denied it had mercenaries in Ukraine, with a spokesperson dismissing the claim as "another clumsy Russian manipulation."

France has been one of Ukraine's staunchest allies since Russia's invasion, and President Emmanuel Macron this week announced Paris would send dozens of long-range missiles to Ukraine.

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