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Kremlin Says Unable to Confirm Reports of U.S. Drone Downed Over Black Sea

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RQ-4B Global Hawk. **United States Air Force**

Authorities in Moscow said Tuesday they could not confirm reports that a Russian fighter jet downed an American surveillance drone over the Black Sea after Ukraine launched a deadly strike against annexed Crimea said to have been carried out with U.S.-supplied missiles.

Pro-war Russian bloggers claimed late Monday that a MiG-31 fighter jet "shot down" a Global Hawk reconnaissance drone over the Black Sea. An anonymous U.S. military official later denied the reported incident, according to Reuters' Pentagon correspondent Idrees Ali.

"To be honest, I don't have this kind of information," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters at a daily briefing when asked to comment about the alleged downing of an American drone.

Russia's Defense Ministry has not issued any statements about an incident involving a Global Hawk aircraft and its warplanes over the Black Sea.

Related article: Kremlin Warns U.S. of 'Consequences' After Deadly Crimea Strike

Russian authorities claim that an attack against the Crimean port city of Sevastopol on Sunday was carried out with U.S.-supplied ATACMS missiles loaded with a cluster warhead.

Four people, including two children, were killed in that missile strike and more than 150 others were injured.

Moscow has blamed both Washington and Kyiv for the strike, accusing the U.S. military of helping direct ATACMS missiles and providing other crucial data to Ukraine.

The Pentagon has responded by saying that Ukrainians "make their own decisions" in picking targets to attack with U.S.-supplied weapons.

Reuters, citing an anonymous U.S. official, reported that ATACMS missiles may have been targeting a rocket launcher system but exploded over a beach after being intercepted by Russian air defense forces.

Ukraine's presidential aide Mykhailo Podolyak accused Russia of "cynically trying to hide and cover up" military targets in Crimea with civilians.

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