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Belousov Discusses Ukraine War With U.S. Defense Secretary

By AFP

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Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov and his U.S. counterpart Lloyd Austin spoke by phone on Tuesday to discuss the war in Ukraine.

Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement that Belousov and Austin had "exchanged views on the situation around Ukraine," noting the conversation took place "at the initiative of the American side."

"Andrei Belousov pointed to the danger of further escalation of the situation in connection with the ongoing supply of U.S. weapons to the Armed Forces of Ukraine," it continued. "Other issues were also discussed."

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Meanwhile, Pentagon spokesman Major General Pat Ryder confirmed the phone call had taken place, saying in a statement that Austin had "emphasized the importance of maintaining lines of communication amid Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine."

Ryder said it was Austin's first call with Belousov, who was appointed by President Vladimir Putin in May.

Russia has condemned the United States for its ongoing military support for Ukraine, and Washington recently gave Kyiv the green light to use its long-range missiles against parts of Russian territory.

On Monday, the Kremlin warned the United States of "consequences" and summoned its ambassador after Moscow said a Ukrainian strike with a U.S. missile in annexed Crimea killed four people.

Ryder said at the time that the Ukrainians "make their own decisions" about where to launch strikes.

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