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Russia Slams Trump's Plan for 'Iron Dome' Missile Defense System

By AFP

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Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova. **Yuri Kochetkov / EPA / TASS**

Authorities in Moscow on Friday criticized U.S. President Donald Trump's plan to build an "iron dome" missile defense system in the United States, saying it risked turning space into an arena of "confrontation."

In an executive order on Monday, Trump called for the creation of an "Iron Dome for America" to counter ballistic and hypersonic missile threats, reviving parts of a controversial Reagan-era plan nicknamed "Star Wars" that would have placed missile interceptors in space.

"We view this as yet another confirmation of the U.S. intent to turn space into an arena of armed confrontation and to deploy weapons there," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in a briefing.

Zakharova claimed the plan would expand Washington's missile deterrence to a scale

"comparable to Reagan's Star Wars," which she called "odious." She said the move was primarily aimed at "devaluing Russian and Chinese strategic deterrence capabilities."

"To put it mildly, these U.S. approaches will not contribute to reducing tensions," Zakharova said.

The "iron dome" in Trump's decree refers to a highly successful system employed by Israel to down short-range rockets.

Washington faces various missile threats from adversaries, but they differ significantly from the short-range weapons that Israel's iron dome is designed to counter.

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