

Moldova Summons Russian Ambassador After Drones Explode on Its Territory

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Wreckage of a Russian drone in Moldova. [@sandumaiamd](https://twitter.com/sandumaiamd) / X

Moldova summoned Russia's ambassador on Thursday after it said Russian drones crashed on its territory, while also announcing the closure of a Kremlin-funded cultural center in connection to the incident.

Airspace intrusions have become frequent since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, with Moscow regularly targeting Ukrainian port infrastructure near the borders of both Moldova and Romania.

"Shahed drones violated our airspace, two exploded on our soil, putting Moldovan lives at risk," Moldovan President Maia Sandu wrote on X, condemning Moscow's war against Ukraine.

Moldova's Foreign Ministry said it summoned the Russian Ambassador Oleg Ozerov to demand an explanation and "strongly protest these unacceptable actions." Ozerov has been called in over similar incidents in the past.

The ministry also [said](#) it would begin the process of shutting down the local branch of Rossotrudnichestvo, a Russian state-funded cultural diplomacy agency, known as the Russian Center of Science and Culture.

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After he was summoned Thursday and [shown](#) the drone fragments, Ozerov [questioned](#) whether they were from a Russian unmanned aircraft.

"How do you know they're Russian?" Ozerov asked reporters outside Moldova's Foreign Ministry building. "We don't rule out provocations by third parties."

But the Russian envoy also acknowledged that the drone explosion may have been an "unfortunate accident."

"Moldova is not a party to the [Russian-Ukrainian] conflict, and Russia has no intentions of aggravating the situation in relations with Moldova," Ozerov said.

Moldova's border police reported that "several" drones crossed into its airspace overnight, with two crashing in fields. Later, authorities said additional drone fragments had been found in a third location.

No casualties were reported.

Meanwhile, Romania's Defense Ministry said its radar systems detected "an aerial target that briefly crossed national airspace" near the Ukrainian port of Reni overnight. Officials launched a search for a potential impact site.

Romania, a NATO member, condemned Russia's continued attacks on Ukraine, which have repeatedly led to security concerns on the military bloc's eastern flank.

AFP contributed reporting.

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