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'Hand of Kremlin?': Russian FM Spokeswoman Mocks Macron Video

By AFP

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rance's President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron disembark from the plane upon their arrival at Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi, Vietnam. **Ludovic Marin / AFP**

Russia's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman on Monday mocked a video of French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron getting off a plane, which has gone viral on social media overnight.

Maria Zakharova wrote on Telegram that Macron had received "a right hook from his wife" as the couple arrived for a visit to Hanoi.

But she said Macron's advisers would try to explain away the gesture.

"Did the first lady decide to cheer up her husband with a gentle pat on the cheek and miscalculated her strength? Was she handing him a tissue, but missed? Did she want to fix his collar but ended up reaching the beloved face?" she said.

"Here's a hint: maybe it was the 'hand of the Kremlin'?" she added.

The video appears to show Macron moving his face away from his wife's hand, which could be interpreted as part of an argument between the two.

Macron denied any "domestic dispute" with his wife, saying that they were "joking as we often do" and noting that other videos had been misinterpreted, such as supposedly showing him sharing a bag of cocaine or confronting the Turkish president.

"None of these are true" and "everyone needs to calm down," he said.

The footage has been replayed multiple times on Russian state TV and has been circulating online on accounts hostile to the French president.

Zakharova, along with the American conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, had earlier wrongly accused Macron and his German and British counterparts of using drugs on a train from Ukraine, after mistaking a crumpled tissue for a bag of cocaine based on a low-definition video.

Even though the claims were later debunked, they still prompted a high-level reaction from the Elysée Palace and the French Foreign Ministry.

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