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Kremlin Dismisses Merz's 'Baseless' Claim That Russia Is Behind Drone Flights in Germany

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Alexander Polegenko / TASS

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's claim that Russia was behind a series of drone sightings in the skies above Germany last week is "baseless," the Kremlin said Monday.

On Sunday, Merz said Germany "assumes that Russia is behind most of these drone flights" after the sightings caused two consecutive closures at Munich Airport last Thursday and Friday. Traffic gradually resumed on Saturday morning, with the delays and cancellations affecting up to 10,000 passengers.

"There are many politicians in Europe who now tend to blame Russia baselessly and indiscriminately for everything. That's how we view these statements [by Merz]," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in response.

"The whole story about these drones is strange, to say the least, but Russia should not be

blamed without evidence," Peskov told reporters.

Merz said the drones have so far been unarmed, but added that European airspace now faces unprecedented incursions surpassing similar incidents during the Cold War.

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German media, citing a confidential police report, reported on Saturday that drones were also seen near Frankfurt Airport, over an ammunition depot and flying in formation above a police base in Gifhorn. Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt described the sightings as an "arms race" that requires urgent action.

Peskov, meanwhile, cited the reported arrest of an "aviation enthusiast" amid the drone sightings to push back against the suggestion that Russia was involved.

Earlier, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova mocked Merz's claim, saying that German authorities will likely investigate the drone sightings "in the next century."

Airports in Denmark, Norway and Poland have also recently introduced temporary flight suspensions due to unidentified drones. High-profile aerial incursions in Estonia and Poland have heightened fears that Russia's war in Ukraine could spill over the EU's borders.

Russian President Vladimir Putin accused Europe of stoking "hysteria" to justify increasing military spending.

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