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‘Only Russia Can Stop It’: Moscow Taunts Europe, Denmark Over Trump’s Greenland Plans

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Nuuk, the capital of Greenland. **Evgeniy Maloletka / AP / TASS**

Russian officials and pro-Kremlin figures have accused the West of “militarizing” the Arctic and ridiculed what they described as Europe’s inability to defend Greenland as U.S. President Donald Trump reiterated his intention to take control of the mineral-rich Arctic island.

Trump has publicly floated the idea of seizing Greenland, an autonomous territory under Danish sovereignty, claiming it was "vital" for his planned Golden Dome air and missile defense system while facing fierce opposition from Greenland and Denmark.

The White House said Wednesday that if the U.S. failed to gain control of Greenland for national security reasons, “Russia or China will” do so instead.

Amid the tensions, Moscow has expressed “serious concern” and accused the West of “militarizing” the island as European military personnel started arriving in Greenland.

Russia's Embassy in Belgium, where NATO is headquartered, said the alliance was using Trump's statements "solely to advance an anti-Russian and anti-Chinese agenda."

"NATO has embarked on a course of accelerated militarization of the Arctic, increasing its military presence there under the fabricated pretext of a growing threat from Moscow and Beijing," the embassy said in a statement late Wednesday.

It added that European officials were already discussing plans to surround the island and deploy a large-scale collective landing force, accusing them of invoking "mythical threats that they themselves have created."

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Copenhagen said Thursday that Washington's ambition to take control of Greenland remained unchanged after Denmark's and Greenland's foreign ministers met with U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Washington.

France, Sweden, Germany and Norway said Wednesday that they would deploy military personnel to Greenland amid rising tensions.

"Soldiers of NATO are expected to be more present in Greenland from today and in the coming days. It is expected that there will be more military flights and ships," Greenland's Deputy Prime Minister Mute Egede said Wednesday, adding they would be "training."

Germany's Defense Ministry said Thursday that a reconnaissance mission involving several European NATO members was aimed at exploring options to ensure security "in light of Russian and Chinese threats in the Arctic."

Russia's Foreign Ministry said Moscow maintained that the Arctic should remain "a region of peace, dialogue and equal cooperation."

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova used Trump's statements to mock the EU, suggesting it should react to U.S. actions over Greenland as it did to Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea — which the West does not recognize.

"Let them look at what they said about Crimea," Zakharova said in an interview with the state-run Sputnik Radio. "It would be very useful for them to fire themselves up over Greenland."

She added that EU officials should focus on European problems instead of international issues, referring to the bloc's comments on the anti-government protests in Iran.

"Why not focus all efforts on Greenland now?" Zakharova said.

"Don't you think the situation in Iran has become a 'convenient excuse' for EU officials to divert public attention from the fact that an island is being taken away from them — without a referendum?" she said, apparently referring to the Russian-held referendum in Crimea.

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Former Russian President and Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev also invoked Crimea, joking that Greenlanders might hold a referendum to join Russia if Trump waited too long.

"According to unverified information, a sudden referendum may take place," Medvedev wrote, joking that Greenland with a population of 55,000 people could become Russia's "90th federal subject."

He also ridiculed Europe's ability to defend Greenland, asking sarcastically: "What [will they] do?! ... Nuke the U.S.?"

"They'll just s*** their pants and give up Greenland. And that would be a great European precedent," he said in a post on X on Wednesday.

Pro-Kremlin media tycoon Konstantin Malofeyev claimed that only Russia could "save" Greenland from a U.S. takeover, suggesting that Denmark's allies would likely fail to help.

"Only Russia can stop this. To save Greenland, Europe and a multipolar world," he said.

Russia's Ambassador to Denmark Vladimir Barbin echoed Moscow's broader talking points, accusing Greenland of anti-Russian sentiments.

"Denmark has chosen to abandon broad international cooperation in the Arctic in favor of pursuing a confrontational policy toward Russia," Barbin said, accusing Denmark of "double standards in its foreign policy."

Pro-Kremlin political analyst Sergei Markov also suggested that Denmark was receiving "punishment from fate" because of its apparent anti-Russian sentiments.

"Denmark's insistence on fueling Russophobic hysteria repeatedly lied that Greenland was threatened by Russia. How exactly it was threatened — they couldn't even explain — but they lied about the Russian threat over and over," Markov said.

"Now Trump wants to take Greenland from Denmark, citing the need to protect it from a Russian threat. And with its weak military, Denmark cannot defend Greenland from Russia. So the U.S. has to take Greenland," he added.

"Isn't that just fair? Simply strikingly fair."

AFP contributed reporting.

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