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Russia's Spy Agency Claims Ukraine Plans to Launch Drone Attacks From Latvia

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Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Director Sergei Naryshkin. **Alexander Shalgin / Russian Historical Society (CC BY 4.0)**

Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) claimed Tuesday that the Ukrainian military plans to use Latvian territory as a launching ground for its ongoing drone attacks against Russia, an allegation that officials in the Baltic country quickly dismissed.

In a statement, the SVR accused Latvia's government of agreeing to let Ukraine fire drones from inside the country "despite... fears of becoming a target for retaliatory strikes by Moscow."

"The primitive Russophobia of Latvia's current rulers proved stronger than their capacity for critical thinking or their sense of self-preservation," the agency said.

Russia's SVR claimed that Ukrainian drone unit troops had already been deployed to five

Latvian military bases.

In a thinly-veiled threat, the agency said the locations of Latvia's "decision-making centers are well-known" to Russia and that its NATO membership "will not protect the accomplices of terrorists from just retribution."

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Latvian Foreign Minister Baiba Braže accused the SVR of running a disinformation campaign against her country, whose prime minister resigned last week after Ukrainian drones strayed into Latvia's airspace and crashed.

"Russia lies again," Braže wrote in a post on X. "Latvia does NOT provide airspace for attacks on Russia. That has been explained several times to Russian representatives."

Several Russian and Ukrainian drones have crashed in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

On Tuesday, Estonia's defense ministry said a NATO jet shot down a Ukrainian drone after it entered the country's airspace, marking the first such interception in the Baltics since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Estonian Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur said the drone was first detected in Latvia before it was shot down by a Romanian F-16 stationed in Lithuania.

AFP contributed reporting.

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