

Kremlin Warns Lithuania Lifting Nuclear Arms Ban Risks Escalation

By [Reuters](#)

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The Lithuanian Seimas. **Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas** / flickr

The Kremlin on Tuesday warned that a preliminary decision by NATO member Lithuania to lift a constitutional ban on hosting nuclear arms on its territory could lead to a new round of escalation in the region.

Lithuania's parliament on Tuesday voted in favor of removing the ban, in the first of two ballots required for the change.

Asked by reporters how Russia viewed that development, as well as a proposal floated this month by U.S. President Donald Trump to build an American military base in the Baltic country, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said:

“If the military infrastructure of what is, in effect, NATO's leading country (the U.S.) is moving closer to our borders, then, of course, this cannot be perceived as anything other than

a step towards escalating tensions.”

He added: “The same applies to the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of a neighboring state. Neither of these developments will contribute to stability and predictability on the European continent; on the contrary, they will, much to our regret, mark yet another significant escalation of tensions.”

Lithuania, a member of the EU and NATO, borders Russia and close Moscow ally Belarus. The U.S. has kept an armored battalion of almost 1,000 troops there since 2019, in overlapping rotations, meaning the ▣troops arrive and leave every few months.

The legal overhaul of the nuclear arms ban, which requires a two-thirds majority in two parliamentary votes to go into effect, is set to remove prohibitions put in place more than three decades ago after Lithuania broke away from the Soviet Union.

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