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Estonia to Close Border Crossings With Russia After Foiled Sabotage Attempt

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NATO, Estonian and EU flags fly over the Narva crossing at the Estonian-Russian border in Narva. **Marko Mumm / AFP**

Estonia will close all its border crossings with Russia on Dec. 1 after a foiled plot against a drone manufacturer was blamed on Russian military intelligence, Foreign Minister Margus Tsahkna announced Sunday evening.

Estonia's Internal Security Service (Kapo) said it had detained eight suspects after thwarting an attempt to set fire to and detonate explosives at Threod Systems, which produces reconnaissance and attack drones, north of Tallinn on Saturday night. The individuals were based in Latvia, chief prosecutor Astrid Asi told journalists.

Tsahkna said the border closure follows "clear evidence" that Russia's GRU military intelligence service "ordered" the attack on Threod Systems, echoing Prime Minister Kristen Michal's claims.

"Closing the border crossings will reduce Russia's ability to conduct hostile activities in

Estonia and strengthen our efforts to prevent sanctions circumvention," Tsahkna wrote on X.

He did not specify how long the border closure would remain in effect. Estonia's three border crossings with Russia represent some of the last remaining overland transit links between Russia and the EU, accounting for more than 60% of Russians' overland trips to Europe.

Michal called the alleged plot "part of Russia's broader hybrid war against Europe, with the aim of decreasing support to Ukraine."

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov on Monday said that the Estonian accusation was part of what he called a pattern of false allegations against Moscow emanating from European countries.

"They are entirely baseless. We therefore cannot accept such accusations. We do not accept them, we do not condone them, we disagree with them, and we completely reject these accusations," said Peskov.

"And, of course, a decision such as this to close all checkpoints and border crossings — well, it's as if Estonia is building a wall. As history shows, many countries have built walls, which have brought nothing good to those who erected them," he added.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told the state-run TASS news agency that, if true, the border closure would amount to "yet another bout of aggressive and unbridled Russophobia."

In August, Estonia arrested Latvian nationals following a similar attempted arson attack against the Tallinn-based defense subcontractor Milrem.

In October, Lithuania reinforced troop deployments along western Russia's Kaliningrad region following a border breach in Latvia involving armed and masked intruders.

Earlier this month, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk accused Russia of staging a border provocation near the Kaliningrad region.

Moscow has repeatedly denied European accusations of orchestrating arson and sabotage campaigns across the continent.

AFP and Reuters contributed reporting.

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