# Tensions Rise as Russia and Ukraine Report Cross-Border Incidents and U.S. Involvement in Crimea



On Wednesday, October 2023, Russia claimed that Ukrainian drones targeted military sites in the Smolensk region, while Ukrainian officials reported damage to infrastructure in Odesa due to a Russian aerial attack.

The Russian Defense Ministry announced the downing of two Ukrainian aerial drones over the Smolensk region. Vasily Anokhin, the regional governor, confirmed on Telegram that Ukraine attempted to strike military installations in the Vyazemsky district, however, he reported no casualties or damage.

In response, Oleh Kiper, the governor of Ukraine's Odesa region, stated on Telegram that a Russian ballistic missile hit an administrative building at an industrial site overnight, though no injuries were reported.

Concurrently, defense chiefs from Russia and the United States had a rare phone call to discuss the ongoing conflict. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin emphasized the importance of communication amidst the ongoing war in Ukraine, marking his first conversation with Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov since his appointment in May. The Russian Defense Ministry acknowledged discussions on the situation in Ukraine, with Belousov highlighting the risks associated with continued U.S. arms supplies to Ukraine.

The tension between the two nations escalated as Russia summoned the U.S. ambassador to protest the use of American ATACMS missiles in an attack on Crimea, which resulted in four fatalities. The operation was allegedly directed by a U.S. Global Hawk surveillance drone operating over neutral waters near Crimea. This incident led to a Russian MiG-31 intercepting the drone, forcing it to return to its base in Italy. Both sides denied that the drone was downed, but Russia claimed it was involved in striking Sevastopol.

The interception incident follows previous airspace tensions, including the downing of a U.S. MQ-9 Reaper drone by a Russian Su-27 fighter in March over the Black Sea.