

Russia uses “disinformation” to try to involve Cyprus in Israel-Iran conflict, says UK

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By Shipping Telegraph



Image via video (screenshot): Ambassador Barbara Woodward, UK permanent representative to the UN.

While maritime security services specialists are warning shipping companies to exercise “heightened vigilance” when sailing through the Strait of Hormuz and close to Iranian waters following Israel’s attack on Iran’s nuclear and military facilities, particularly if their ships are linked to Israel, United Kingdom firmly denied Russia’s allegations that the British sovereign bases on the island of Cyprus were in any way involved, calling the claims “nonsense” and “deeply irresponsible.”

Speaking at the emergency UN Security Council meeting on Iran, ambassador Barbara Woodward, UK permanent representative to the UN, rejected Russian claims that British sovereign bases in Cyprus played any role in the military operation, mentioning that the U.K. was not involved in the strikes.

Britain’s permanent representative to the United Nations, Barbara Woodward, formally responded to the Russian claims by saying that “the UK did not participate in this action. And let me say clearly and unequivocally that Russia’s claims that the British sovereign bases on the island of Cyprus were in any way involved is nonsense. It is deeply irresponsible at moments like this for Russia to be spreading disinformation. We firmly support any diplomatic efforts to return to stability.”

Woodward reiterated London’s concern over rising tensions in the Middle East. “We are deeply concerned by Israel’s strikes on sites in Iran, as well as the Iranian military action we’ve already seen in response. There is a clear risk that this crisis escalates, with serious implications for peace and security across the region and beyond. This is in no-one’s interests.”

Our first priority must be to prevent further escalation in the Middle East, Woodward continued, adding that the UK calls on all parties to step back, show restraint and reduce tensions.

The president of Cyprus, Nikos Christodoulides, when asked to comment on the developments in the region and to respond on the reference of the British side regarding the British bases, commented: "Cyprus, I want to reiterate, is not involved in any way in this dispute. Our role is purely humanitarian, and we are ready. We have activated the Special National Plan ESTIA in case there is a necessity to play our part, which is nothing more than humanitarian."

During the weekend, Nikos Christodoulides said that Iran has formally requested Cyprus to convey a message to the Israeli government in the context of the ongoing conflict between the two countries.

"Iran has asked us to convey a message to Israel, and we will do so," the president said on Sunday in a statement to reporters regarding the situation in the area.

In light of the escalating developments in the region and following the activation of the Special National Plan ESTIA, the authorities on Cyprus have activated an "early-warning" mobile application for providing information to the population on the closest bunker in the event of an emergency.

To remind, the Special National Plan ESTIA is the national action plan of the ministry of foreign affairs of Cyprus, which is activated in case of emergency or crisis, to allow for the safe evacuation of civilians from a nearby crisis area (from the wider Middle East region) through the Republic of Cyprus.

"What concerns us is that the crisis does not escalate further. The de-escalation of the crisis is in the interest of the entire region," the government of Cyprus highlighted. "Cyprus is not involved in any way and its role, as always, is stabilizing and humanitarian," said Friday the president regarding the developments in the region.

Meanwhile, the application «SafeCY», which was launched on Saturday, June 14, is available for devices Android via PlayStore and iOS via AppStore, and operates in both Greek and English.

Through the application, citizens can locate the nearest shelters in the area that are currently located, while there is the option to search for a shelter in other ways, such as by address, postal code, etc.

The application has also incorporated guidelines and useful information in order to better inform citizens.

The «SafeCY» application utilizes the capabilities provided by modern technology to strengthen the early warning mechanism of the population.

The development and operation of the application reflect the country's goal to enhance the protection of citizens, especially in cases of emergency, where quick and immediate information is required.