
RUSSIA SENDS ISKANDER MISSILES TO TAJIKISTAN FOR DRILLS

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Russia says it has sent Iskander-M tactical ballistic missile systems to Tajikistan for military drills, the first time Moscow has moved this type of missile to the Central Asian country.

Colonel General Vladimir Zarudnitsky, the commander of Russia's Central Military District troops, said on May 25 in the city of Yekaterinburg that the missile system will be used in the Dushanbe-Antiterror 2017 military maneuvers.

The May 30-June 1 drills are to be conducted by the Antiterrorism Center of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), a loose grouping of former Soviet republics.

Russian authorities said earlier that Sukhoi Su-24M frontline bombers from the southern Urals and Mi-8 and Mi-24 military helicopters from the city of Novosibirsk, had been deployed to Tajikistan for the maneuvers.

Russia has about 7,000 troops stationed at three facilities that are considered part of a single Russian base in Tajikistan, which shares a border with war-torn Afghanistan.

Tajikistan is part of the Moscow-dominated CSTO security alliance but also has military ties with the United States.

The commander of the U.S. Central Command, General Joseph Votel, visited in April for talks, which Tajikistan said focused on issues that included the prospects for military cooperation and "broadening cooperation on strengthening the capabilities" of Tajik border forces.

Kaynak/Source: