
SERBIAN MILITARY PILOTS JOIN RUSSIANS FOR BARS 2017 EXERCISE

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The drill, dubbed BARS 2017, is taking place at the Lipetsk-2 airport, some 500 kilometers southeast of Moscow, the Serbian Ministry of Defense said in a statement.

MiG-29, Mi-8 and Mi-17 pilots will, from October 2 to 8, carry out "a number of flying activities in mixed crews, with the topic - 'Preparation and realization of combat actions during the execution of the tasks of destroying paramilitary formations and conducting search and rescue actions'," the statement said.

A group of 17 Serbian pilots led by Commander of the 204th Aviation Brigade Colonel Zeljko Bilix was welcomed by General Yury Sushkov, head of the State Flight Personnel Training and Flight Test Center, the MoD said, adding that the Russian officer "welcomed his colleagues from Serbia highly assessing the current cooperation between the two air forces and the overall relations between the two countries."

"Depending on the meteorological conditions during the next four days, Russian and Serbian pilots will exchange experiences and knowledge in the field of combat use of aircraft in the armaments of both armies," the statement said, adding:

"The training includes nine MiG-29 airplanes in the UB, SMT, and UBM versions, as well as 11 Mi-8 helicopters in modifications MT, MTV-5, and AMTS."

This year's BARS exercise will also see participation of the special purpose ("spetsnaz") unit of the Russian Airborne Troops (VDV).

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