
RUSSIA PLEDGES TO HELP TAJIKISTAN MODERNIZE ITS ARMY, FORTIFY BORDERS

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Russia will assist Tajikistan in modernizing its armed forces and fortifying its state border in light of threats emanating from Afghanistans territory, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Tuesday following talks with his Tajik counterpart Sirodjiddin Muhridin.

"We have already began work to provide assistance to our Tajik friends in re-equipping their armed forces, fortifying the state border, including in light of the persisting threats, which continue to emanate from Afghanistans territory," he said.

The minister pointed to the role played by the 201st Russian military base in Tajikistan. "This is an important factor for Tajikistans security and an important factor of those common challenges dealt with by the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)," he emphasized.

"We expressed quite a few interesting ideas concerning the development of cooperation in Central Asia to solve the remaining problems here most effectively and promote the harmonious development of all states in the region," Lavrov noted.

"Russia is ready to contribute to these processes using our historical connections, our common economic base, which was created during the Soviet era and, of course, using our mutual interest in maintaining the security of this region where our allies and friends live."

<http://tass.com/politics/1043254>

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