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**RUSSIA-SERBIA MILITARY COOPERATION ACTIVELY DEVELOPING - DEFENSE MINISTER**

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The military cooperation between Russia and Serbia is developing actively, while events in this sphere are multiplying by the year, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said at a meeting with his Serbian counterpart Aleksandar Vulin on Saturday.

"Today I would like to discuss a number of issues of our military and technical cooperation. The military cooperation is developing actively and events are increasing annually," Shoigu said. According to him, preparations for drills is in the final stages. "I am sure they will be held successfully as it happened before," the minister pointed out.

"Our military and technical cooperation is developing rather securely, in spite of all the obstacles others are putting in our way. Nevertheless, everything is going according to the plan, Whats been set out for this year will be achieved," he continued.

The minister also said that Russia and Serbia have many events planned for next year, particularly in the military-technical, educational and other spheres.

In turn, Vulin shared an opinion that Russia and Serbias opinion in the military sphere is at its highest level in history. According to him, the two countries have never held such an amount of joint events like now. This year has seen about 90 of them.

The Serbian minister also said President Aleksandar Vucic had invited Shoigu to Belgrade to assess achievements of the Serbian army.

"Our president and commander-in-chief Aleksandar Vucic sends you the warmest of regards and a personal invitation to visit Belgrade, Serbia, to see for yourself how far along the Serbian army is in its developments thanks to your personal involvement, how it has become much more combat-capable," Vulin said.

Vulin shared his opinion that "the more combat-capable the Serbian army is, the more piece there will be in the Balkans."

"As you know, Serbia is a militarily neutral state and it will remain this. As long as [President] Vucic leads the country, it will not join NATO, it will choose friends and make decisions on how to act itself," he voiced the position of his country.

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