

Formidable Russian Air Power Targets ISIS in Syria

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Russian air power is a force to be reckoned with, matching America's best - with state-of-the-art warplanes, attack helicopters and support aircraft, backed up with unmatched surface-to-air missile defenses.

In mid-September, US Air Forces in Europe commander General Frank Forenc called the quality and quantity of Russian aircraft "alarming," saying America's "advantage...is shrinking" - code language for admitting Russia's capability matches the Pentagon's best.

Russia's Defense Ministry said 50 warplanes and helicopters were deployed in Syria. Spokesman Igor Konashenkov said it was completed on "very short notice...possible because we had most of the material and ammunition ready at our (naval) depot in Tartus."

"We only had to move our aircraft and deliver some extra equipment." Sophisticated Su-24M and Su-25 ground attack planes" are being used.

Wednesday night sorties followed daytime attacks, targeting four Islamic State facilities. "A terrorist HQ and an ammunition depot were destroyed near Idlib, as were a fortified three-level command center near Hama. A direct bomb hit also completely destroyed a workshop north of Homs that produced explosives and ammunition," Konashenkov explained.

All the airstrikes are being conducted in coordination with the Syrian Army command. The Syrian Defense Ministry has deployed an operative group at the Hmairim air base.

During day one of operations, 12 ISIS targets were struck. Expect dozens more to follow, likely hundreds.

On Thursday, Vladimir Putin said fabricated reports of civilian casualties surfaced before Russia's air campaign began. Propaganda works this way.

As for any information in the media on civilians suffering (from Russian airstrikes), we were ready for such (mis)information attacks. I draw your attention to the fact that the first reports on civilian casualties emerged before our planes even left the ground.

America and "(o)ther nations have been bombing Syrian territory for over a year" with no Security Council authorization or permission from Damascus.

"We have such an invitation," Putin stressed, "and we intend to fight against terrorist organizations and them only."

Dozens of fake videos and other material surfaced online and in Western media reports after Moscow announced its campaign. Putin calls them "information attacks" - propaganda war on truth blasted worldwide. It's fast reaching gale force.

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His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

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