

Russia Ready to Activate Tajikistan Military Base Over Fighting in Afghanistan

Over 1,000 Afghan soldiers fled into neighboring Tajikistan after fighting with the Taliban near the border

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Russia said it is [prepared to activate a military base in Tajikistan](#) in response to fighting in Afghanistan near the central Asian country’s southern border. After over 1,000 Afghan soldiers retreated from fighting with the Taliban and fled into Tajikistan, Tajik officials requested assistance from a Russian-led military alliance.

Tajikistan, Russia, and four other former Soviet states are members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). “Given the current situation in the region, as well as the remoteness and mountainous terrain of some parts of the border with Afghanistan, dealing with this challenge on our own seems difficult,” Hasan Sultonov, [the Tajik representative to the CSTO, said on Wednesday](#).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Moscow is prepared to help its treaty ally. “We’ll do everything, including using the capabilities of the Russian military base on the border of Tajikistan with Afghanistan, to prevent any aggressive encroachments against our allies,” he said.

Tajikistan has activated 20,000 reservists to bolster the border in response to the Afghan soldiers entering the country. It’s unlikely that the Taliban would open up a front in Tajikistan, especially if it risks drawing Russia into the fighting. But the violence in northeast Afghanistan will continue to spill into Tajikistan to some extent.

Russia has been very critical of the US and NATO’s withdrawal from Afghanistan. Despite the almost 20 years of wars, Lavrov described the Western exit from the country as a “hasty withdrawal.”

“The situation is rapidly deteriorating, including in the context of the hasty withdrawal of American and other NATO troops, who over their decades of their stay in this country have not achieved visible results in terms of stabilizing the situation there,” Lavrov said.

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