

U.S. To Upgrade Georgia's Air Defenses With Iran Strike In Mind

By [Stop NATO](#)

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US to help Georgia modernize air defence system

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The situation around Iran is becoming tenser. Georgia is presenting itself as a reliable U.S. ally. To confirm this, it has sent its forces to Afghanistan. In fact, at a time when America's NATO partners are gradually pulling out their forces from that country, Georgia is strengthening its contingent. Most likely, Tbilisi wants to take part in the anti-Iranian campaign.

A group of American military experts has arrived in Georgia to study the state of affairs of the republic's air defence system. After gathering information, the experts will work out a relevant doctrine, and on its basis Georgia's air defence system will be upgraded.

MAN: According to Georgian Defence Minister Dmitry Shashkin, his country hopes to get American assistance not only in upgrading its air defence system but also updating Georgia's obsolete military helicopters. At present, American experts have started analyzing the capabilities and demands of the Georgian air defence system. Georgian authorities have made it clear that there is a need to strengthen air defences because the country is bordering with a potentially aggressive neighbour. However, this anti-Russian phobia has nothing to do with reality, says editor-in-chief of the "Independent Military Review" magazine Victor Litovkin.

"If Russia wanted to launch a serious attack on Georgia, Russian forces could have easily captured Tbilisi and formed a new government in August 2008. We had no plans to do so. Russia only liberated the territory of South Ossetia captured by Georgian forces," Victor Litovkin said.

Meanwhile, each side of the American-Georgian strategic partnership agreement concluded three years ago is receiving dividends. Concerning the U.S., according to Victor Litovkin, the American military industry is interested in upgrading the Georgian air defence system. Understandably, this will be done using equipment produced in the U.S. As for Georgia, in this case, Mikhail Saakashvili will gain an advantage. Georgia will hold parliamentary elections in two weeks, and information about the strengthening of the country's defence capability will help the ruling party and President Saakashvili to win additional votes, says president of the Society of Scholars in Caucasus Studies Alexander Krylov.

"Saakashvili will try to exploit the situation by saying that Georgia could be subjected to aggression and play on the sentiment of voters who usually unite in support of the

government in such a situation," Alexander Krylov said.

There is another reason for upgrading the Georgian air defence system. The situation around Iran is becoming tenser. Georgia is presenting itself as a reliable U.S. ally. To confirm this, it has sent it forces to Afghanistan. In fact, at a time when America's NATO partners are gradually pulling out their forces from that country, Georgia is strengthening its contingent. Most likely, Tbilisi wants to take part in the anti-Iranian campaign. Teheran has already announced that Iran will launch attacks on the allies of the U.S. and Israel. In this case, the upgrading of the air defence system is crucial for Georgia.

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