

Working Together: Russia and China conduct their First Joint Military Operations

By [Ria Novosti](#)

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Russia and China are in charge of providing security for the Syrian government's chemical arsenal as it is being taken out of the country, a senior Russian diplomat said on Wednesday.

"We have undertaken ensuring that those chemicals are safely loaded onto Dutch and Norwegian container ships and safely transported while in Syrian waters. In other words, we will convoy these vessels," Mikhail Ulyanov, head of the foreign ministry's security and disarmament department, told RIA Novosti.

"We are not going to do this on our own, our Chinese partners will assist us," he said. "It will be the first time when the military of Russia and China will perform their professional tasks side-by-side in a real-life crisis, not during joint drills."

The operation to destroy the Syrian government's arsenal of more than 1,000 metric tons of weapons-grade chemicals is due to take place in two stages. The most dangerous weapons have to be removed from Syria by the end of December and destroyed at sea by April, whereas the rest is slated for destruction by mid-2014.

Russia is among many countries assisting the disarmament effort. Last week, Moscow deployed 75 vehicles in Syria to transport the dangerous cargo.

Russia will also donate up to \$2 million to finance the international operation. The money is to be transferred to UN accounts soon.

The United States will provide a navy ship upon which the chemicals will be neutralized in international waters, as well as nearly 3,000 container drums to store the chemicals and GPS trackers to monitor their movement. It will also provide loading, transportation and decontamination equipment.

Denmark and Norway will provide ships and military escorts for transporting the Syrian chemicals at sea and for carrying chemicals to be disposed of at commercial facilities.

Finland has also offered chemical weapon "emergency-response" capabilities, and Italy has provided access to a port for trans-loading the priority chemicals from Danish and Norwegian vessels to the US ship.

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