

From: Mark Tavlarides
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2017 3:21 PM
To: Mark Tavlarides
Subject: Top Facts: Armenia Integrates Military Forces, Air Defense with Russia

As you know, Nagorno-Karabakh, a region of Azerbaijan, has been illegally occupied by Armenian military forces for 25 years.

Toward that end, we thought you would be interested in the facts below about Armenia's close military alliance with Russia.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Mark



ARMENIA INTEGRATES MILITARY FORCES, AIR DEFENSES WITH RUSSIA

Following the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the former Soviet states were allowed to choose multilateral alliances that best served their national goals. Many naturally gravitated to the United States because the former communist bloc was in economic and political disarray. However, as Russia has re-emerged as a powerful player on the world stage, some of these countries have sought to align their military and foreign policy goals with Russia instead of the United States, Europe and the West.

One of these former Soviet nations is Armenia. While it often claims support for the US, the facts tell a different story. Below are the top 12 things US policy- and lawmakers should know about the Armenia-Russia military alliance.

1. Armenia is the only country to be provided state-of-the-art Iskander missiles from Russia. It's worth noting that Russia has also deployed these missiles in Syria and along the Baltic Sea in Kaliningrad. Source: <https://sputniknews.com/military/201702221050928905-armenia-iskander-missiles-sargsyan/>
2. Armenia's defense minister has proclaimed that Russia is a "strategic ally" and that relations between the two countries and their militaries are "very high." Source: <https://sputniknews.com/military/201702221050945487-armenia-russia-military-cooperation/>
3. Armenia and Russia have created a joint military command where Armenian forces will be subordinate to the "commander of Russia's southern military district" during a time of war. Source: <https://themoscowtimes.com/news/russia-and-armenia-to-create-joint-military-forces-56121>

4. Armenia is a founding member of the Russian-inspired Collective Security Treaty Organization - Russia's counterbalance to NATO, which obligates Armenia to the following: "If one of the Member States undergoes aggression, it will be considered by the Member States as aggression to all the Member States of this Treaty." Source: www.mfa.am/en/international-organisations/CSTO/
5. Following pressure from Russia, Armenia withdrew from a joint NATO exercise in Georgia in September 2017. In fact, the Vice Speaker of Armenia's parliament, in defending the decision, claimed that Armenia "sees no alternative to the [Russian-organized] CSTO." Source: www.eurasianet.org/node/84956
6. Armenia operates a joint air defense system with Russia, which enables Russia to "extend the geographic span of the joint air defenses to the entire South Caucasus." The system includes deployment of the highly-sophisticated S-300 systems, anti-aircraft weapons, and the deployment of Russia MiG-29 fighter jets to a Russian military base in Armenia. Source: <https://anca.org/russia-to-establish-joint-air-defense-system-with-armenia/>
7. Armenia hosted Russian troops and advanced war-fighting capabilities for the "Battle Brotherhood - 2017" military exercises in October 2017. Source: www.armradio.am/en/2017/10/10/russian-armenian-air-forces-carry-out-joint-drills-during-interaction-2017/
8. More than 5,000 Russian military personnel are based in Armenia at Russia's 102nd Military Base - one of only four of the country's military bases outside of Russia. Armenia will host the Russia military at this large installation through at least 2044 under an extension of the original agreement. Additionally, Russia has nearly 2,500 border security personnel stationed on Armenia's borders with Turkey and Iran - the old borders of the Soviet Union. Source: www.armradio.am/en/2017/10/10/russian-armenian-air-forces-carry-out-joint-drills-during-interaction-2017/
9. Armenia hosts Russian stealth drones - and has worked with Russia to test the state-of-the-art UAVs at one of its training ranges - at a Russian military base close to the Syrian border. Source: www.armradio.am/en/2015/12/15/russia-tests-new-stealth-drones-at-armenian-military-base/
10. Armenia allows Russia to base a squadron of MiG fighters and attack helicopters at the Erebuni Airport, located 4.5 miles south of Yerevan. The largely military airport is home to Russia's 3624th Air Base. Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeYdIDMhZCw>
11. Russia signed an agreement in early October to loan Armenia \$100 million at low-interest to buy Russian military equipment. Source: <http://asbarez.com/167510/russia-to-lend-armenia-100-million-for-purchasing-arms/>
12. Armenia's President has been critical of Armenian officials who want Armenia to distance itself from Russia. The President was quoted in July, 2017, saying: "They suggest that we reconsider the sides we're cooperating with us. Who are we supposed to reconsider? Turkey or NATO? Are they looking forward to our going to them?" Source: <http://en.apa.az/world-news/cis-countries-news/sargsyan-russia-s-sale-of-arms-to-azerbaijan-is-most-painful-aspect-of-armenia-russia-relations.html>

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