

1) **Crimea.** 5-28 SEP: Russia recently deployed marines from the elite 810th Naval Infantry Brigade based in Sevastopol, Crimea to Syria. ISW partner AllSource Analysis identified an Alligator LST in the midst of loading operations in Sevastopol, possibly the Saratov, which passed through the Bosphorus on its way to Syria on September 28. An "anti-terror group" of Russian naval infantrymen is being deployed Tartus, Syria at the beginning of October aboard a Russian repair ship.

2) **Krasnodar Kray.** 09-24 SEP: At least 6 Russian cargo ships departed the southwestern Russian port city of Novorossiysk, Krasnodar Kray and docked at Tartus and Latakia, Syria.

28 SEP: Russian troops from the Special Forces (spetsnaz) brigade of the Southern Military District carried out an exercise in Krasnodar Kray including airborne assault drills and hostage rescue from militants.

3) **North Caucasus.** 28 SEP: Russia launched CT operations in five districts of southern Dagestan, where ISIS's Wilayat Qawqaz has claimed to have militants.

4) **South Caucasus.** 30 SEP – 4 OCT: Exercise "Indestructible Brotherhood" of the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) will take place at the "Bagramyan" firing field in Armavir Oblast, Armenia to train "neutralizing illegal armed formations." A unit from the 15th motor-rifle brigade of Russia's "Peacekeeping Forces" was deployed to the exercise.

5) **Iraq.** 27 SEP: Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov acknowledged the creation of an anti-ISIS joint military coordination center in Baghdad.

6) **Belarus.** 19 SEP: President Putin issued a decree calling on the Russian defense and foreign ministries to reach an agreement with Belarus on the establishment of a Russian airbase on Belarusian soil.

7) **Egypt.** 16 SEP: Russia and Egypt agreed to hold joint counterterrorism exercises in Egypt in October and November of this year aimed at increasing Egyptian ability to fight terrorism internally.

8) **Central Asia.** 15 SEP: President Putin called on the international community to join together in the fight against ISIS at a meeting of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in Tajikistan. CSTO members signed a cooperation agreement for the transport of armed formations and military equipment.



9) **Eastern Mediterranean.** 03 SEP: Russia's Novocherkassk and Korolev LSTs passed through the Bosphorus into the Mediterranean.

22 SEP: Russia deployed four warships from the Black Sea Fleet to the eastern Mediterranean to carry "military drills," including the Smetlivy destroyer, the Pytlivy and Ladny frigates, and the Moskva cruiser.

24 SEP: Russia's MoD announced that the Russian navy would carry out drills in the eastern Mediterranean from 30 SEP to 07 OCT. Russia contacted international aviation authorities in early September to warn against aircraft travelling between Cyprus and Tartus, Syria.

28 SEP: Russia's Nikolay Filchenkov LST passed through the Bosphorus into the Mediterranean along with Anchor handling tug supply vessel KIL-158, used to fortify ports.

10) **Syria.** 21 SEP: 1,700 Russian specialists were reported to be at the Russian naval facility in Tartus.

21-22 SEP: Russia deployed 6 x Su-34, 12 x SU-25 and 12 x Su-24 attack aircraft to a growing air base at al-Assad international airport IVO Latakia, Syria, joining 4 x Su-30 and dozens of attack and transport helicopters already stationed there along with a battalion of marines from the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade. Armored personnel carriers, main battle tanks, and artillery were also reported on site.

30 SEP-01 OCT: Russian airstrikes commenced in Homs, Hama, Idlib, and Latakia provinces against Syrian rebel and Jabhat al-Nusra positions that included Western-backed former Free Syrian Army brigades.

11) **Ukrainian border.** 9-23 SEP: Russia were reported to be developing two new bases along its border with government-held northeastern Ukraine. The planned bases in Soloti, Belgorod Oblast and Boguchar, Voronezh Oblast will reportedly have the capacity to house 8,500 soldiers, armored vehicles, and heavy weapons.

12) **Central Military District.** 14 SEP: Russia launched its week-long "Center 2015" military exercise to train "blocking and destroying illegal armed formations," including 95,000 Russian troops, 170 aircraft, 20 naval ships, as well as troops from Kazakhstan.

Russia mobilized and transported forces and equipment to Syria under the guise of military exercises. The link between Russia's arrival at the naval base at Tartus and its military exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean are clear, and the proximity in time of Russia's deployment into Syria and its Center 2015 exercise indicates that these military exercises served as preludes or covers for deployments. Russia is flexing its military power and basing in more than one location. On September 8, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Moscow was prepared to establish airbases in the former Soviet countries making up the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) alliance. On September 19, President Vladimir Putin signed a decree calling for Russia's foreign and defense ministries to conduct negotiations with Minsk to establish a Russian air base in Belarus. Two new ground force bases are in development near Russia's border with government-controlled northeastern Ukraine, suggesting that Russia will maintain its aggressive military posture toward Ukraine in the coming years. Russia's activities in Syria appear to be part of a larger strategy aimed at bolstering its security, political and economic interests from the eastern Mediterranean to Central Asia.