

Russia to send S-300s to Syria



Moscow, September 24 (RHC)-- Russia supplying Syria with the S-300 missile complex is a measure to protect Russian troops and is not directed against third countries, Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists on Monday.

The decision to deliver S-300 missiles to Syria was taken to protect the Russian military more securely after the downing of an Ilyushin Il-20 aircraft in Syria, he stressed.

"According to information of our military experts, the downing of the plane over the Mediterranean happened due to an intentional action of Israeli pilots, which cannot but harm our relations," Peskov said.

The spokesman added that according to conclusions of Russian military experts, "a chain of tragic coincidences" led to the deaths of Russian military, but "moves by Israeli pilots contributed a lot" to the loss of the Russian aircraft.

A Russian electronic surveillance Il-20 plane was downed over the Mediterranean Sea late on September 17. According to the Russian defense ministry, the plane was shot down by a missile from a Syrian S-200 air defense complex when it was firing at four Israeli F-16 aircrafts that were attacking targets in the Latakia governorate.

The Israeli pilots actually used the Russian aircraft as a cover, exposing it to Syrian missiles, the ministry stressed.



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