



How NATO's New Romanian Base Motivates Russia to Win in Ukraine

Description

WORLD : Romania has kicked off a \$2.7 billion project to expand the Romanian Air Force 57th Air Base Mihail Kogalniceanu in order to accommodate up to 10,000 NATO soldiers, as well as new runways, weapons platforms, and hangars for military aircraft.

The upgraded base is expected to have a total perimeter of 30 kilometers and cover an area of roughly 3,000 hectares. "NATO has pursued and is pursuing a policy of expanding its influence in zones that pose a threat to Russia.

Apart from the bases in Kosovo, which the Americans have built over the past 10 years, there has never been such a serious facility in the Balkans," Leonid Reshetnikov, a retired lieutenant general of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), told Sputnik.

Located near the Black Sea port of Constanta, the new NATO base will be built just 130 km from Ukraine's border and around 300 km from the port city of Odessa.

This means that the transatlantic alliance would move even closer to Russia, given that the nation's Crimean Republic shares a maritime border with Romania.

"Now they are simply moving close to our borders," the intelligence veteran continued. "There is a de facto maritime border between Romania and Russia. Therefore, a huge base is being built in order to control the Black Sea region, the Russian part, the Caucasian coast, the straits, as well as Turkiye."

Over the past decades, the US and NATO have built a series of small jump-off bases in former Warsaw Pact countries located on the Black Sea coastline. However, the new base is aimed at expanding NATO's control over the sea and neighboring regions, according to Reshetnikov.

"This [base] certainly poses a serious challenge to Russia's security, the activities of the Russian Armed Forces in the Black Sea region, as well as to Russia's relations with Turkiye

in relation to [Ankara's] policy of independence or autonomy within NATO. This is a very serious bid by the US and NATO to control a huge region," the retired lieutenant general said.

The intelligence veteran specified that once the base is built, NATO will be able to maintain control of both the air and land domains all along the Black Sea region from Turkey to Romania.

He warned that Crimea, the Sea of Azov and its coast would be within the striking range of the new NATO base, as well as Russia's Krasnodar region and Abkhazia.

Still, Russia can counterbalance the threat posed by the new NATO installations in Romania by strengthening its military presence in its southwestern regions and reaching the goals of the special military operation, according to Reshetnikov.

"It will be a powerful response if we ensure the security of Russia's new territories, take Kiev out of the game, and reach the goals that Putin proclaimed two years ago – demilitarization, de-Nazification of what Ukraine will be like after we complete the liberation of the territories which have already become part of Russia, as well as those that are historically Russian territories," suggested Reshetnikov.

The retired lieutenant general emphasized that Russia has no alternative to accomplishing its major tasks in Ukraine; otherwise, the expanded NATO presence in eastern and southern Europe will pose not just a strategic military threat but also an existential threat to Russia as a sovereign integral state.

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