



Russia Deploys MiG Fighters Armed With Hypersonic Missiles To Kaliningrad

Description

RUSSIA/UKRAINE: Russia's defense ministry announced Thursday that it has deployed fighter planes equipped with cutting edge hypersonic missiles to its Baltic region exclave of Kaliningrad, which a statement said will provide "additional measures of strategic deterrence."

The statement detailed that three MiG-31 fighters armed with Kinzhal hypersonic missiles have landed at the Chkalovsk air base in Kaliningrad Oblast. The defense ministry emphasized that the warplanes will be put on "**round-the-clock alert**" – at a moment tensions with Ukraine's powerful Western backers like the United States continue to soar.



File image via Russian MoD

On a few alleged occasions over the last six months of war in Ukraine, Russia has been accused of

launching hypersonic missiles on Ukrainian targets; however, the Pentagon has downplayed that it's not a gamechanger.

But such an intentionally publicized move as placing hypersonic missile armed MiG fighters on "alert" at Russia's Baltic outpost is an escalatory move aimed at NATO and Ukraine's Western backers which have been ramping up longer-range missile and weapons shipments to Kiev. Kaliningrad borders NATO members Poland and Lithuania, both of which will see this move as a severe threat to their national security.

The *Associated Press* is reporting that Finland is alarmed its airspace may have been violated by the MiGs as they were en route to the Kaliningrad base:

*A video released by the Defense Ministry showed the fighters arriving at the base but not carrying the missiles, which were **apparently delivered separately**.*

*Finland's Defense Ministry said Thursday that two Russian MIG-31 fighter jets were **suspected of having violating Finnish airspace** in the Gulf of Finland off the southern town of Porvoo, west of Helsinki. The Nordic country's Border Guard started a preliminary investigation into the incident.*

The Russian MoD and state media **released video of the MiG fighters arriving in Kaliningrad**. Ukraine government-linked officials have also highlighted the transfer with alarm...

Russia has relocated MiG-31 fighters with "Dagger" missiles to the Chkalovsk airfield in the Kaliningrad region bordering Lithuania and Poland. pic.twitter.com/bA7Jl891SW

— Iuliia Mendel (@IuliiaMendel) [August 18, 2022](#)

As for Finland, Germany earlier in the week said that the military alliance will seek to fast-track its membership in NATO after its controversial application alongside Sweden. This after prior Kremlin warnings that doing so could unleash a nuclear arms build-up and standoff in the Baltics.

Moscow had already bolstered its forces in Kaliningrad with precision-guided, **nuclear-capable Iskander missiles** and other advanced systems, and for years there have already been concerns in Europe and the West that it could build-up nuclear weapons there – at installations a mere 50 miles from Poland.

However, Russia claims it is exercising "nuclear responsibility" and that it must take steps to 'deter' threats from the West amid the [Ukraine conflict](#):

*"The events in Ukraine demonstrated that **a clash with the collective West is a real possibility**," Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ivan Nechayev said Thursday while emphasizing that a **"direct confrontation with the U.S. and NATO isn't in our interests."***

Speaking at a briefing, Nechayev said: “Russia as a nuclear power will continue to act with maximum responsibility” and “the Russian military doctrine envisages a nuclear response only in retaliation to an aggression involving weapons of mass destruction or in a situation when the very existence of the state comes under threat.”



But he stressed that apart from the nuclear question, Russia’s military possesses enough conventional weapons **“allow it to fully implement the goals set by the Russian president”** – in reference to the “special operation” in Ukraine ordered by Putin.

“We proceed from the assumption that the U.S. and NATO are aware where their aggressive anti-Russian rhetoric with an emphasis on a possible use of nuclear weapons can lead to,” Nechayev said.

by Tyler Durden

Category

1. Army-Wars-Conflict Zones-Military Tech.
2. Main

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