

Russian Bombers To Be Sent To Gulf Of Mexico



Russian long-ranger bombers will expand their regular patrols to the Arctic, the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, military officials have said.

The move comes after NATO reported a spike in Russian military flights over the Black, Baltic and North seas as well as the Atlantic Ocean.

It reflects Moscow's increasingly tough posture amid tensions with the West over Ukraine.

Defence minister Sergei Shoigu said the long-range bombers would fly along Russian borders and over the Arctic Ocean.

"In the current situation we have to maintain military presence in the western Atlantic and eastern Pacific, as well as the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico," he added.

1/7



Russian nuclear-capable strategic bombers made regular patrols across the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans during the Cold War.

However, economic restraints in the early post-Soviet era forced the military to cut back.

The flights were resumed after President Vladimir Putin came to power and have become increasingly frequent.

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NATO nations have complained of several incursions into the airspace by Russian aircraft in recent months.

On Monday, the European Leadership Network issued a report stating there had been a sharp rise in military encounters between Russian and NATO since the annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region in March.

Three of the nearly 40 incidents, the think tank said, carried a "high probability" of causing casualties or triggering a direct military confrontation, it said.



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Video: June 2014: Russian Jets Deployed