
Russian army launches humanitarian op in Syria - General Staff

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Although a number of non-governmental organizations have been providing humanitarian aid on Syrian territory, most of the supplies sent have ended up on territories controlled by terrorists.

Russian air force provides support for 7,000 Syrian rebels advancing on [#ISIS](http://on.rt.com/71j3) <http://on.rt.com/71j3>



"The extremists used most of that aid for the supply of [terrorist] gangs," Lieutenant General Sergey Rudskoy, chief of the main operations department of the Russian General Staff, said during a press briefing in Moscow.

"On top of that, multiple attempts have been registered to deliver arms and munitions, and to evacuate wounded militants under the guise of humanitarian convoys," Rudskoy stressed. According to the general, these issues with the foreign aid sent so far have led to Russia taking the decision to launch a humanitarian operation of its own in Syria.

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'Russia will provide the Syrian people with all possible help to liberate the country from extremists and return peace to the nation.'

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A Syrian Ilyushin Il-76 jumbo jet has already delivered the first batch of humanitarian aid to the Syrian city of Deir ez-Zor, Rudskoy said. At present, most of the aid is being channeled to Deir ez-Zor, which was under siege by terrorists for a long period of time, Rudskoy said. The first 22 tons of humanitarian aid have been airdropped from a Syrian Il-76 using Russian parachute platform airdrop systems. Supplies are set to continue, Rudskoy said, stressing that Russia will provide the Syrian people with all possible help to liberate the country from extremists and return peace to the nation.

At the same briefing, Rudskoy announced that up to 10,500 fighters of the democratic Syrian opposition have joined with government forces to oust Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) terrorists from Syrian territory. The armed opposition forces are playing *"an increasing role"* in the fight against terrorism, he said.

Also speaking at the briefing, Defense Ministry spokesman General-Major Igor Konashenkov said the ministry refutes Amnesty International's allegations of the Russian air force delivering airstrikes on civilian installations in Syria.

Rudskoi said Moscow is set to continue to inform the international public about the results of the airstrikes delivered by the US-led coalition in Syria to avoid falsifications.

"In case our colleagues stay quiet about the results of their bombings in Syria, we will have to inform the public of such facts ourselves," Rudskoi said. "If someone does not realize that, that's too bad."

"Over just 100 days of the Russian Air Force operation in Syria, Islamic State lost control over 217 communities; over 1,000 sq. kilometers have been liberated," Rudskoi said.

According to the general, since the beginning of the air operation in Syria on September 30, the Russian Air Force has conducted 5,662 operational sorties, including 145 sorties made by strategic bombers from the territory of Russia. Altogether 97 cruise missiles have been launched from Russian warships in the Caspian Sea, a diesel submarine in the Mediterranean and from strategic bombers.
