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Yemen Plans More Arms Purchases

By The Moscow Times

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Yemen said it is ready to buy armored vehicles and air defense weapons from Russia and modernize previously purchased military hardware.

Potential purchases were expected to be discussed at a meeting Wednesday between Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and Yemeni President Abd Rabuh Mansur Hadi, according to a statement issued prior to the meeting, Interfax reported.

Yemen is interested in purchasing the BTR-80A amphibious armored personnel carriers and Russian air defense systems.

In addition, Yemen is looking for Russia to service its MiG-29 fourth-generation fighter jets and repair IL-76TD and An-26 support aircraft.

Yemen has been a long-term importer of Russian weaponry, with overall purchases totaling almost $9 billion. This includes $7.5 billion of weapons and specialized equipment and vehicles, and another $1.2 billion in military related services.

Russian and Yemeni specialists are continuing a joint investigation into the causes of a crash of an An-26 transport plane that occurred in November in Sana'a, the country's capital.

Meanwhile, last year Russian military exports grew by 12 percent over the previous year, reaching $15.2 billion, President Putin said Wednesday at a meeting of the commission of military technology cooperation with foreign countries.

This made Russia the world's second largest arms exporter behind only the U.S.

Russia is delivering weapons to 66 different countries and has signed military technology cooperation agreements with 85 nations, Putin said.

There are now $46.3 billion worth of orders on the books, he added.

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