

Russia Denies Finland's Claim of Violating Air Space

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia on Wednesday denied Finland's claim that Russian war planes illegally crossed Finland's air border on Tuesday, saying the flights were carried out as part of planned combat training and that there was evidence to prove this.

The incident comes days after Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev warned NATO against expanding to include Finland and Sweden, saying it would upset the balance of power and force Russia to respond. The two nations are currently negotiating the possibility of joining the alliance.

On Tuesday morning, Finland sent two Hornet fighter planes into the air after it noticed two Russian military planes violating Finnish air space in the area of the Gulf of Finland, Finnish television Yle reported, without identifying the planes.

Finland's border guard service is looking into the incident, Yle cited Finland's Defense

Ministry as [saying](#).

But Russia said the two planes, a Tu-22 and Su-27, from the Western Military District, were flying on a combat training mission and did not cross the country's border, which can be confirmed by "materials of objective control," regional military spokesman Vladimir Drobyshevsky told [Interfax](#).

On May 13, Finland made similar accusations against Russia, though Russia denied them, saying Finnish air controllers gave permission for its war plane to approach the Finnish border at a distance of 15 kilometers because of bad weather conditions and that the plane stayed over a neutral area of the Gulf of Finland.

In 2008, Finland [announced](#) plans to buy 12 new air space radars and attributed the move to violations by Russian planes. The first radar entered into service this January.

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