

Russian Pilots Will Not Join Fight Against Islamic Rebels in Iraq

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian soldiers unload a Russian Sukhoi SU-25 plane in al-Muthanna Iraqi military base at Baghdad airport in Baghdad.

Russian fighter-jet pilots will not participate in military action against Islamic militants in Iraq, Moscow's top diplomat in the restive Middle Eastern country said Tuesday.

Though Russian specialists accompanied a shipment of fighter jets that arrived in Baghdad on Saturday, their roles in Iraq will be limited to assisting with the jets' assembly and ensuring their flight-worthiness, Russian Ambassador to Iraq Ilya Morgunov told RIA Novosti.

"Our pilots do not have to fly and participate in military operations. This is prohibited," he added.

The Iraqi Defense Ministry announced on its website over the weekend that it had received

a shipment of five Russian Sukhoi, Su-24, fighter jets.

The jets will be used to bolster Iraq's fight against the spread of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant forces into the country's interior.

The jets are expected to be assembled and operational within three days.

At least 2,417 Iraqis were killed in June alone "in acts of terrorism and violence," and another 2,287 were injured, according to figures released Tuesday by the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq. Of those killed in June, 1,531 were reportedly civilians.

See also:

[Russia Sends Sukhoi Jets to Iraq, Slams West Over Syria](#)

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