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Peru to Receive 8 Russian Military Helicopters in December

By The Moscow Times

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A Mi-171Sh helicopter.

Russia will deliver 8 Mi-171Sh multi-purpose helicopters to Peru's air force in December, the deputy director of Russia's arms export agency was quoted as saying Friday.

Peru, a major buyer of Russian military hardware, bought 24 helicopters from Russia for $406 million in December last year for use in combating drug trafficking and to replace eight Mi-17 military transport helicopters purchased from the Soviet Union in 1984.

"Two or three weeks ago, the Russian Defense Minister visited Peru and we [Russia and Peru] discussed the project's progress," RIA Novosti quoted Sergey Goreslavsky, the deputy director of Rosoboronexport, as saying. "The first eight helicopters ... will be delivered in the first half of December."

Goreslavsky said Russia would deliver the new helicopters by December 9, in time for military

celebrations in Peru that month. The Peruvian Defense Ministry said in May the helicopters would be delivered in November.

Russian and Soviet aircraft form a large part of Peru's air force — about half of Peru's warplanes are Russian-made, and most of its helicopters. In recent years, Moscow has been trying to reenergize its economic and political ties to South America.

As part of a separate deal, Peru is also spending $11 million to repair and refit three Mi-171 helicopters bought from Russia in 2010, and $2.8 million to overhaul an Mi-17-1B helicopter used to transport the Peruvian president.

Goreslavsky also reaffirmed Rosoboronexport's participation in the creation of a maintenance and repair center in Peru for Russian helicopters and Su-25 fighter jets used by South American countries.

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