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Russia Celebrates 100th Air Defense Anniversary By Flexing Military Muscle

By The Moscow Times

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Pedestrians passing a launcher truck Monday. Air-defense systems are on display in Moscow to celebrate the Russian air defense forces' anniversary.

Russia displayed its mobile air defense missile systems in central Moscow on Monday, underlining its military might amid tensions with the West over Ukraine.

President Vladimir Putin said last week that Russia would have enough resources and resolve to protect it from what he described as enemies seeking to dismember the country.

Mounted on dark green military trucks, the S-400 'Triumph' and Pantsir-S1 surface-to-air missile systems, as well as the Kasta radar station, appeared outside the capital's huge Russian Army Theater.

The Defense Ministry said the equipment was put on display to mark the 100th anniversary of the creation of the air defense forces.

The West has expressed growing concern over what it says is Russia flexing its military muscle, including by intensifying air activity around Europe and beefing up its military forces on the Crimean peninsula, which Moscow annexed from Kiev in March.

The Kiev government, NATO, Washington and its allies have accused Russia of sending in troops and arms to back separatist rebels in Ukraine's east — setting up the worst confrontation between Moscow and the West since the Cold War.

Russia has dismissed the accusations.

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