

Cyprus Signs Military Deal With Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian President Vladimir Putin and Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades attend a news conference at the Novo-Ogaryovo state residence outside Moscow, Feb. 25, 2015.

Cyprus on Wednesday signed a deal with Russia allowing its navy ships to make regular port calls on the island.

The deal with European Union member Cyprus, which also hosts British military bases, comes amid Russia-West tensions over Ukraine, the worst since Cold War times.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said after Thursday's talks with visiting Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades that the agreement would primarily refer to Russian navy ships involved in international counter-terrorism and anti-piracy efforts. He added that military cooperation between Russia and Cyprus isn't directed against any third party.

"Our friendly ties aren't aimed against anyone," Putin said. "I don't think it should cause worries anywhere."

Russia has sought permission for navy ships to use ports in various parts of the world to replenish supplies and undergo maintenance, deals that would allow Moscow to expand its global military presence.

Russian ships already have made port calls at Limassol, but the new agreement apparently aims to create a more solid legal basis for that.

Speaking to TASS news agency before his trip to Moscow, Anastasiades said that Cyprus and Russia were also discussing a possibility for Russian planes to use an air base near Paphos for humanitarian relief missions.

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