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Russia Sees Little Chance of Getting Mistral Warships From France – Report

By The Moscow Times

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The Russian navy frigate Smolny is seen at the STX Les Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard site in Saint-Nazaire, western France.

The probability of two French-built Mistral-class warships being delivered to the Russian navy remains low, but discussions between Paris and Moscow are ongoing, an unidentified source in Russia's Defense Ministry told Interfax.

"From the character of these communications it is clear that there is practically no hope that the situation will be resolved and Russia will receive the Mistrals after all. I would put the odds at 99 to 1," state news agency Interfax on Friday quoted the source as saying.

Over recent months, scores of Russian officials have claimed that the loss of the Mistral carriers will not be a major blow to the Russian navy, but that France needs to pay up for failing to make good on the 1.2 billion euro ($1.3 billion) contract.

The first Mistral warship was supposed to be delivered to the Russian navy last November, but France in September chose to suspend the deal in response to Moscow's support for separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

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