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General Says Russian S-300 Missiles Won't Alter 'Military Option' in Iran

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Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Martin Dempsey speaks to reporters at thPentagon in Washington April 16, 2015.

The U.S. military option to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and encourage a diplomatic solution, remains intact despite Russia's decision to deliver its S-300 missile defense system to Tehran, the top U.S. general said Thursday.

"We've known about the potential for that system to be sold to Iran for several years and have accounted for it in all of our planning," General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the U.S. military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a news conference.

"The military option that I owe the president to both encourage the diplomatic solution and, if the diplomacy fails, to ensure that Iran doesn't achieve a nuclear weapon, is intact."

Moscow's move to provide the surface-to-air missile system to Tehran, which irked the West and drew protests from Israel, followed an initial deal under which Tehran would curb its nuclear activities in exchange for an end to economic sanctions.

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