The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Obama: Russian S-300 Missiles Won't Protect Against U.S. Strikes in Iran

By The Moscow Times

April 22, 2015



Four U.S. Air Force F-35A Lightning II aircrafts are seen in the sky above the coast of Florida.

U.S. President Barack Obama on Tuesday urged "perspective" on Iran's S-300 missile deal with Russia, saying the weapons were no match against his country's military prowess.

The S-300 air defense systems, built by Russia's largest defense contractor Almaz-Antey, are some of the most advanced weapons of their kind on the market, prompting fears that the weapons would be used to defend Iranian nuclear sites.

But in a televised interview on MSNBC's "Hardball" program, Obama said the U.S.' roughly $600-billion defense budget outstripped any military strategy that Iran could afford, with the latter only spending $17 billion on defense.

"Even if the [Iranians] have got some [Russian S-300] air defense systems. ..You know, if we had to, we could penetrate them," Obama told interviewer Chris Matthews.

“This is a sale that has been pending for six years. In fact, the Russians stopped it at my request as we were putting together the sanctions that ultimately brought the Iranians to the table. It's of concern, we object to it ... [but] we have to keep this in perspective,” he added.

Iran signed a contract with Russia to buy five S-300 systems for $800 million in 2007, but in 2010 then-President Dmitry Medvedev decided to freeze delivery as a sign of good will toward the West.

Putin earlier this month signed a decree lifting the ban after world powers, including Russia, reached an interim deal with Iran on curbing its nuclear program.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/04/22/obama-russian-s-300-missiles-wont-protect-against-us-strikes-in-iran-a45988