

First Groups of Russian Warplanes Withdraw From Syria

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Russian Defense Ministry has announced that the first groups of Russian aircrafts have been withdrawn from Syria, the TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

The news comes after Russian President Vladimir Putin gave orders on Monday to withdraw Russia's main military contingent from Syria beginning on March 15, claiming their objectives have been "carried out in full."

The first group of planes has flown from Russia's Khmeimim airbase in Syria and are making their way to permanent airbases in Russia, TASS reported.

"Each group is composed of a 'leader' (Tupolev Tu-154 or Ilyushin Il-76), in which utility personnel travel, together with aeronautical and technical equipment, followed by Russian warplanes of varying models," the Russian Defense Ministry announced in a press release, TASS reported.

The aircraft were part of Russia's military operations against insurgents in Syria that began in September 2015, carried out at the request of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

A partial cease-fire has been observed in Syria since Feb. 27, after an agreement was brokered by the United States and Russia. It does not extend to groups recognized as terrorist organizations by the United Nations.

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