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Putin Approves Air Force Deployment in Syria

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Defense Ministry

President Vladimir Putin has signed a bill to deploy Russian Air Force units to Syria, the Interfax news service reported on Friday.

The new law ratifies an earlier agreement signed between the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic in August 2015, which first authorized the deployment of Russian military forces in Syria.

According to the agreement, the Russian Air Force is considered to be on Syrian territory at the request of the Syrian government, and it shall be allowed to utilize the air base at Hmeimim (Latakia province) and the surrounding infrastructure as necessary.

The text of the agreement further states that all arms, ammunition, and equipment necessary to sustain the Russian units shall be imported free of any charge.

Russian personnel and their family members are granted diplomatic immunity in the

agreement, and all transport means used to ship equipment and ammunition to Syria is to be immune from inspections, searches, or impounding.

The agreement also states that the Syrian government will not make any legal claims against the Russian government or the personnel of its armed forces serving in Syrian territory.

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