The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Kyrgyz President Wants Foreign Military Bases Out

December 01, 2016



Kyrgyzstan's President Almazbek Atambayev **Kremlin Press Service**

Kyrgyzstan's President Almazbek Atambayev said he believes it is necessary to close American and Russian military bases so that Kyrgyzstan can ''rely on its own strength,'' the RBC news website reported Thursday.

''I believe we did the absolutely right thing when we evicted the American "Ganci" air base, whether people like it or not,'' the president said, speaking at an annual press conference.

''But the main thing is that Kyrgyzstan should rely on its own strength in the future. This also applies to the Russian base.''

He explained that the previous agreement on the Russian military base in Kyrgyzstan was signed by former President Kurmanbek Bakiyev, and implied an extension of the lease for another 49 years, then 25. According to him, the term had been reduced to 15 years.

''We will always be a strategic partner to Russia and Belarus, but our hopes must rest only on

our own armed forces. Not on bases of Russia, America or any other country," the president said. "I have reached an understanding in this matter with Russian President Vladimir Putin and I am grateful to him for that," he added.

The United States operated a logistics base at Manas airport (Ganci air base) from 2001 to 2014. Russia maintains its own air base near the village of Kant in the suburbs of the capital Bishkek. The Russian base hosts Su-25 ground attack aircraft and Mi-8 transport helicopters.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/12/01/kyrgyz-president-wants-foreign-military-bases-out-a56382