

# Testing of Russia's 'Texas-killing' Nuclear Missile Delayed, Again

March 23, 2017



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Testing of Russia's newest intercontinental nuclear missile, the RS-28 Sarmat, has been delayed to later this year, an unidentified source in Russia's defense industry was quoted by the TASS news agency as saying on March 23.

It is the latest in a series of delays that suggest Russia is struggling to modernize aspects of its nuclear forces. Testing was reported to begin in late 2016, but was moved to March 2017. Now, according to the source, it won't happen till later this year.

"[Silo launch] testing of the Sarmat from the Plesetsk launch facility in March won't happen," the source was quoted as saying. "It has been shifted back to the second quarter of 2017, likely in April."

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Sarmat is Russia's newest nuclear missile design, and when completed will be the heaviest weapon of its kind to ever be deployed. It can carry a reported 10 heavy nuclear warheads and is designed to break through U.S. missile defense systems.

Last year, the Defense Ministry's Zvezda news agency claimed Sarmat was so powerful, that a single missile could evade Washington's defenses and wipe out the entire state of Texas.

According to TASS, the main reason for the delay is the need to complete the testing of new hardware in the missile's test stands. The most recent tests of Sarmat hardware were conducted in September, with a controlled firing of the missile's engine.

TASS was unable to obtain official confirmation of the delay.

Original url:

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