

Russia Launches Air Defense Exercises With Six CIS Allies, Over 100 Warplanes

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MiG-29 / Wikimedia

Russia and six of its regional allies have launched joint air defense drills involving over 100 warplanes, the Russian Defense Ministry announced Thursday.

Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan agreed to work on a unified Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) air defense system in 1995. Separate Russian-Belarusian and Russian-Kazakh joint air defense systems are already in place.

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At 8 a.m. Moscow time on Thursday, the Russian military said more than 130 CIS command posts had commenced exercises to locate and shoot down enemy aircraft.

The maneuvers include Su-27, MiG-29 and MiG-31 fighter jets; Su-24 and Su-34 bombers; as

well as combat trainers, long-range bombers and helicopters, Interfax [reported](#).

Joint CIS air defense missile systems and radar units are also involved, the Defense Ministry said.

The drills are being directed by the Moscow-based Aerospace Forces command center.

Russia's central military district commander Lieutenant General Alexander Lapin [said](#) earlier that four large-scale exercises are planned in the post-Soviet region this year.

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