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Russia to Send Military 'Specialists' to Republic of Congo

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Russia has signed a bilateral agreement to send military "specialists" to the Republic of Congo to advise their counterparts and repair Soviet equipment in a move that further increases Moscow's footprint on the continent.

The Republic of Congo is the latest sub-Saharan African nation where Russia has stepped up its presence recently. Since Western nations sanctioned Russia for annexing Crimea in 2014, Moscow has signed at least 20 military cooperation deals in sub-Saharan Africa, including with Ethiopia, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

Embed:

"This is a new contract but, as a whole, continues the very beautiful story that was once started called military-technical cooperation," Russia's Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Fomin was quoted by Interfax as saying.

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The Russian advisers will help the Republic of Congo's military with the upkeep of armored vehicles, rocket artillery and helicopters, Fomin said.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told reporters that Russian specialists are already on the ground there, Interfax reported.

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