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Sudan Renegotiating Russian Naval Base Deal – Reports

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The Sudanese army chief of staff's remarks follows Arab media reports in April that Sudan had suspended the naval base agreement. **Russian Navy**

Sudan's transitional government is renegotiating the previous administration's naval base agreement with Russia, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported Tuesday.

The Sudanese army chief of staff's remarks follows Arab media reports in April that Sudan had suspended the naval base agreement. Russia's Embassy in Khartoum said at the time it had not yet been notified of the decision.

"We're in the process of renegotiating an agreement signed between the former government of Sudan and Russia regarding a Russian military project on the Sudanese Red Sea coast," Mohammed Osman al-Hussein was quoted as saying.

"The agreement can be continued if we find benefits and profits for our country," RIA Novosti quoted al-Hussein as saying to Sudan's Blue Nile TV broadcaster.

President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Wednesday that the Kremlin had seen the news about Sudan's decision and that it would "deal with this issue" through "constant contact" with Sudanese officials.

In December, Russia announced the signing of what would have been its first naval base in Africa and second on foreign territory after Syria's Tartous. The 25-year deal entailed building a logistics hub for nuclear-powered warships, up to 300 military and civilian personnel in Port Sudan and the ability to ferry weapons into Sudan free of inspections.

Sudan, suffering from civil war, the 2011 secession of oil-rich South Sudan and three decades of U.S. sanctions, has been under a transitional civilian-majority government since the April 2019 ouster of longtime president Omar Bashir.

The United States removed Sudan from its blacklist of state sponsors of terrorism in December after the country agreed to normalize ties with Israel. Al-Hussein, the Sudanese army's chief of staff, also told Blue Nile TV that Khartoum is open to military cooperation with the U.S.

He added that the current review of the Russian naval base deal is legal because it had not been approved by Sudan's legislative council, the body that ratifies international agreements, under the previous administration.

The Russian Embassy in Khartoum has not yet confirmed or denied al-Hussein's announcement.

Russia has made efforts to regain its Soviet-era influence in Africa in recent years, providing military assistance and financial investments in exchange for mining rights across the mineral-rich continent.

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