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Russia Shows Advanced S-500 Live Fire Test

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The S-500 missile system is touted for its capability of intercepting stealth warplanes and destroying hypersonic weapons and satellites in near space. **Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation / YouTube**

Russia's military has for the first time released footage of a live fire test of its advanced S-500 Prometheus missile system on Tuesday.

The footage showed the vehicle elevating into the launch-ready position, releasing the radar and firing a missile into the air. The Defense Ministry said in a statement that the launch took place at the Kapustin Yar shooting range in southern Russia and the system engaged a "high-speed ballistic target."

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"The live firing conducted during trials confirmed the Russian military air defense equipment's specified tactical and technical characteristics and high reliability," it said.

Intended as a supplement to S-400, the Almaz-Antey defense contractor's S-500 system is touted for its capability of intercepting stealth warplanes as well as destroying hypersonic weapons and satellites in near space.

In Tuesday's statement, the Russian military said the S-500 "is objectively unlike anything in the world and is designed to destroy the entire range of existing and future air and space attack weapons in the entire range of altitudes and speeds."

The S-500 was reported to have carried out the world's longest surface-to-air missile system test in 2018, flying 80 kilometers longer than previous tests and engaging a target 480 kilometers away.

"After the full test cycle is complete, the first S-500 system will be delivered to the Moscow region air defense and missile defense unit," the press release said.

The Defense Ministry did not say when the surface-to-air system is expected to enter service.

The S-500 was thought to be scheduled for delivery in 2025, though senior defense officials say the equipment could be slated for earlier delivery.

Its live fire test in Kapustin Yar was publicized one day after the Defense Ministry showed footage of another successful test of its Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missile in the Barents Sea in northern Russia.

U.S. Defense Department spokesman John Kirby, when asked about the Tsirkon test Monday, criticized Russia's hypersonic missiles as "destabilizing and [risky] because they are nuclear capable systems."

Russia's Embassy in Washington retorted with a warning of "inadvertent conflict" if the United States deploys hypersonic missiles in Europe amid heightened tensions between Moscow and the West.

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