The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Defense Minister Threatens Use of Cluster Munitions in Ukraine

August 15, 2023



Kharkivoda.gov.ua

Russia reserves the right to use cluster munitions in Ukraine in response to U.S. supplies of the banned weapons to Kyiv, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said Tuesday.

Though Russia and Ukraine have accused each other of using cluster bombs in the 17-month conflict, Shoigu claimed Moscow has refrained from doing so out of "humanitarian" concerns.

"However, this decision may be reconsidered," he said at a security conference in Moscow without elaborating further. "We also have cluster munitions in our armament."

Ukraine received supplies of U.S. cluster munitions in July on condition to use them exclusively against Russian soldiers. Moscow has accused Ukrainian forces of using the munitions to shell Russian-occupied territories.

Related article: Russia Says U.S. Cluster Bombs for Ukraine Show 'Weakness'

Humanitarian groups have strongly opposed Washington's decision to supply cluster bombs to Ukraine, which can go undetonated and potentially endanger civilian lives for years. But Shoigu decried what he claimed to be a lack of condemnation from humanitarian organizations.

Shoigu further claimed that Ukraine's counteroffensive was failing and its military was running out of ammunition and equipment despite support from the West.

"Preliminary results of the hostilities show that Ukraine's military resources are almost exhausted," he said.

Meanwhile, Shoigu played up Russia's role in "debunking many myths of superior Western military standards," including the training of tens of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers by the United States and its NATO allies.

"Many of them have been sent to the frontline, captured and, afterwards, spoke in detail about the methods of NATO training," Shoigu said.

"In most cases, the reviews were negative."

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/08/15/russian-defense-minister-threatens-use-of-cluster-munitions-in-ukraine-a82152