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# Russia Starts Pulling Forces From Base in Northeast Syria – Reuters

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**Video screenshot**

Russia has begun withdrawing its forces from Qamishli airport in northeastern Syria, a move that could signal the end of its military presence in the region, Reuters reported Monday, citing five Syrian sources.

Military equipment and heavy weapons have reportedly been transferred to Russia's Khmeimim airbase on Syria's western coast in recent days. Part of the Russian contingent was expected to move to the Khmeimim base while others would return to Russia, Reuters' sources said.

Russian troops have been stationed at Qamishli airport since 2019. Located in the capital of Syria's Kurdish region, the base served as a key outpost for monitoring northeastern Syria and as a logistical hub for troop movements.

The withdrawal comes amid intensified operations by Syrian government forces as the new leadership in Damascus seeks to assert control over the whole country.

This month, units loyal to President Ahmed al-Sharaa recaptured large swathes of territory in the country's north and east from the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces.

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The two sides agreed on Saturday to extend a ceasefire for 15 days, Reuters said.

Last week, the Kommersant business daily cited an unidentified Syrian source as saying that Damascus could soon ask Russia to leave the Qamishli base because "there's nothing for them [the Russians] to do there."

The issue is reportedly expected to be raised once the province of Hasakah comes fully under government control.

Since coming to power about 14 months ago, Syria's new leadership has said it was prepared to honor past agreements with Moscow, suggesting that Russia could continue to operate its main bases at Khmeimim and the port of Tartus.

However, Anton Mardasov, an expert at the Russian International Affairs Council, said Russia had lost its role as a regional mediator amid mounting pressure on the Kurds and intensifying competition, making a drawdown of its presence in northeastern Syria a logical step.

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