

Medvedev Addresses Russian Armed Forces

The following is the official transcript of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's speech to the leadership of the Armed Forces on Nov. 29, 2011, with introductory remarks, as they appeared on the President of Russia website (<http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/3141>).

Dmitry Medvedev held a meeting with the leadership of the Armed Forces in a Space Forces military unit.

During the meeting, Dmitry Medvedev noted that the commissioning of the Voronezh-DM radar station is a signal of Russia's readiness to give an adequate response to the threat posed by the missile defense system of NATO countries in Europe to Russia's strategic nuclear forces. The President stressed that Voronezh-DM is a tool for controlling the air space and is not a threat to neighboring countries. Mr. Medvedev stressed that the deployment of the radar station provides an opportunity to use the information collected by the station in the interest of European missile defense. President Medvedev instructed the Defense Ministry to address the issues of the radar's capacity parameters, to create good working conditions for the highly skilled professionals serving at the station and provide social benefits for the servicemen and their families.

President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev

Comrades, officers:

We have all just witnessed the deployment of our early warning radar station, putting it on combat duty. The radar station will issue warnings of missile attacks, as well as perform other functions and protect our interests in the direction of the greatest missile threat.

We believe that the station can be used to build a positive relationship with our European partners as part of a joint anti-missile defense system on the European continent. I would particularly like to emphasize once again that we are ready to use the station's unique capa-

bilities together with our partners to counter possible missile threats.

Unfortunately, we do not sense the readiness of our American and European colleagues to join efforts with us. Moreover, the European missile defense system, which is currently being established, clearly encroaches on our interests and thereby causes significant problems for the security of the Russian Federation.

In this context and in line with my decision, the Defense Ministry has launched the measures I announced on November 23 on countering the relevant plans. I hope that our Western partners will view this step as a signal of Russia's readiness to give an adequate response to the threat posed by the missile defense system to Russia's strategic nuclear forces. At the same time I would like to note that the Voronezh-DM radar station is an instrument for controlling the air space and by itself it certainly does not pose a threat to our neighbors. Its deployment does not close the doors to dialogue, to continuing the discussion on those issues we are conducting with our colleagues. Furthermore, the station's capabilities will make it possible to use the information gathered by the radar in the interest of a pan-European missile defense system. But I repeat, in this situation, the final approach should be formulated by NATO countries, the United States and our European partners.

In any case, the standard statements that the new system of the adaptive and phased transition to a European missile defense system is not directed against Russia can no longer satisfy us. These statements are made orally and unfortunately do not guarantee the protection of our interests. If other steps are made, naturally we will be ready to listen to them. However, it is not enough to issue oral statements. So when they tell us that the system is not directed against us, I would like to reply as follows: Friends, the early warning radar station that was put on combat duty today is not directed against you either; on the contrary, it can work for you and towards achieving the aims we have set for ourselves.

With regard to further actions, it is entirely up to those who make the relevant decisions today. If our signal is not heard, then, as I said on November 23, we will deploy other defense means, including the adoption of tough countermeasures and deployment of the main attack force.

The station has been put on combat duty, which



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Russian Prime Minister Medvedev (right) visits the military unit in Kaliningrad Region, where the Voronezh-DM missile attack early warning radar station is deployed.

means that it has begun to work as a finished facility, although a number of parameters are still to be built up over time.

Therefore, I instruct the Defense Ministry, first, to carry out all the tasks required to achieve that. Second, I expect that the servicemen on duty at the station will be our highly trained Space Forces, our new combat arm. We should create good conditions for their service.

The station is modern; it was put together fast, using the right materials. I'm not even talking about the electronics inside, which is hopefully also on the highest level. But we must also address everyday problems, problems related to placement, officers' accommodation, as well as issues related to the employment of wives of the military personnel, providing kindergartens and transportation services for those who work here, improving the engineering infrastructure and building a good road. I think all of this may be done within a very short time. I have issued the relevant instructions to the Defense Minister and the Kaliningrad Region Governor.

Once again, I congratulate all of you on the deployment of a new radar system. This is an important step to protect the interests of our country and our citizens.

Mr. Serdyukov, the floor is yours.

Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov: Thank you, Mr. President. This is the third early warning radar station of high operational capacity. Earlier such radars were deployed in the Leningrad Region and in Armavir, and now in Kaliningrad.

The latest advances in science and technology have been used here. With each station we build, we increase our capabilities and look at ways to reduce their construction time. This station was built in less than two years, which I think is quite good for

such a facility.

Dmitry Medvedev: In addition, the construction costs, without revealing the exact figures, are significantly lower than was the case with similar stations built in the Soviet times, including the existing stations, which is important in terms of cost saving, as that is always a major priority for the Defense Ministry.

Anatoly Serdyukov: As we increase its capabilities, it will extend for up to 6,000 kilometers and keep track of 500 objects at a time: these are its design characteristics. Starting from December 1, the Space Forces troops will begin to serve here. It will be a significant contribution to the development of these troops. For all the tasks you have set us, we will draft an action plan as soon as possible and submit it to you together with the deadlines for their implementation. That is, the plan will contain the dates, specific measures and full details of the steps we believe are necessary to carry out your orders.

Dmitry Medvedev: Thank you. You said 6,000 kilometers is the station's maximum range. That is a very considerable distance. In combination with other radars they can tackle all the challenges facing the Space Forces to protect our state's interests.