

Russia Tells U.S. Military to Get Out of Syria

by John Haltiwanger via jaxie - Newsweek *Friday, Dec 22 2017, 2:02am*

international / prose / post

Russia ramped up its calls for the U.S. military to depart from Syria on Thursday, contending it has no substantial reasons to be in the country and its presence there "must end."

"Any reasons cited by the Americans to justify their further military presence... are just excuses and we think their presence must end," Alexander Lavrentiev, Russian President Vladimir Putin's envoy to Syria, told reporters. Lavrentiev was in Astana, Kazakhstan, on Thursday ahead of peace talks regarding the Syria conflict between Russia, Iran and Turkey, Reuters [reports](#). Russia, a major ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, has played a significant role in the Syria conflict.

This is not the first time the Russian government has [expressed such views](#) in recent weeks. Russia seemingly feels the U.S. military has no purpose in Syria now that the the Islamic State militant group (ISIS) has largely lost its foothold in Syria and Iraq. The envoy's remarks also come after the U.S. and Russia have sparred over airspace in Syria. In mid-December, two U.S. warplanes in Syria were diverted from supporting ground operations against ISIS to [intercept Russian fighter jets](#) that allegedly crossed into U.S. coalition airspace.

But the Pentagon has signified it has [no plans to withdraw](#) U.S. troops from Syria any time in the near future. "We are going to maintain our commitment on the ground as long as we need to, to support our partners and prevent the return of terrorist groups," Pentagon spokesperson Eric Pahon told Agence France-Presse earlier this month. "To ensure an enduring defeat of ISIS, the coalition must ensure it cannot regenerate, reclaim lost ground or plot external attacks," he added. There are currently nearly [2,000 U.S. troops in Syria](#), according to numbers from the Pentagon.

Copyright applies.

<http://www.newsweek.com/russia-tells-us-military-get-out-syria-756463>

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-3068.html>