

Americans to Fly to Afghanistan Via North Pole and Kazakhstan

By [Global Research](#)

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Kazakhstan has granted permission to the United States to fly through its airspace when delivering troops and equipment to Afghanistan via the Arctic. The agreement was reached during a recent meeting between President Barack Obama and President Nursultan Nazarbayev in Washington.

The two countries broached the issue when the Pentagon suspended deliveries via the Transit Center at Manas in Kyrgyzstan after last week's unrest in that Central Asian country.

Mike McFaul, an Obama security advisor, told journalists that the two presidents had discussed flights from the United States to Afghanistan via the North Pole and Kazakhstan, which is more expeditious than flying over Europe.

Several media, including Radio Liberty, have reported that the transit agreement was signed on Sunday.

The transit issue was discussed in the absence of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who arrived in Washington after the Obama-Nazarbayev meeting. The region is within Russia's special interest zone where a fierce geopolitical struggle is currently under way.

Leonid Ivashov, president of the Russian Academy of Geopolitical Sciences, who had been chief of the Russian Defense Ministry's main department of international cooperation for years, said that the U.S.-Kazakh transit agreements "threaten the interests of Russia and other countries, notably China and especially Iran against which the United States is preparing a military operation."

"Russia has no legal reason to prevent them from signing the agreements because it is a signatory of the ICAO convention and hence should allow planes from the signatory countries to fly over its territory," the general said.

Russia supports the U.S.-led NATO operation in Afghanistan and hence the U.S. presence in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries, he said. On the other hand, such a presence may have a negative geopolitical implication since the U.S. could theoretically use its military aircraft flights for reconnaissance purposes against China, in particular the nuclear weapons R&D center in western China.

Ivashov also said that America could deploy a military base in Kazakhstan similar in size to the Kyrgyz facility.

However, Gen. Pyotr Deinekin, who was commander-in-chief of Russia's Air Force in

1991-1998, thinks that the route via the North Pole and Kazakhstan is the best option, adding that the United States should pay for flying over Russia.

"Russia could sell not only oil but also its air space for a profit," the general said.

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