

# Dangerous Crossroads: US and Russian Air Forces Engaged in Syria? US Acts as ISIS' Air Force

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*The Russian MOD has reported today that on November 23rd, there was a major incident where US and Russian air forces engaged each other in Syria. According to the MOD today, December 9th, Major-General Igor Konashenkov, the Russian Defense Ministry's spokesperson was quoted saying:*

*"An American F-22 fighter actively prevented the Russian pair of Su-25 attack aircraft from carrying out a combat mission to destroy the Daesh stronghold in the suburbs of the city of Mayadin in the airspace over the western bank of the Euphrates River on November 23. The F-22 aircraft fired off heat flares and released brake shields with permanent maneuvering, imitating an air battle,"*

In this critical statement, it was also highlighted that the Russian Federation, pursuant to international law and UN resolutions, considers the presence of US air-forces in Syria to be illegal.

With increased clarity over the US role in Syria, the MOD now more transparently explains that **most of the near-misses between the two Air Forces, Russian and American, in Syria and Iraq were connected with Washington's attempts to help ISIS avoid defeat.**

In response to this, US military representatives communicated with their Russian counterparts that there are certain parts of the airspace that belong to the US.

The MOD official responded to this, with:

*"The statements of the US Army representatives that a part of the Syrian airspace belongs to the US is puzzling," Konashenkov stated.*

He went on to remind the Pentagon:

*"Syria is a sovereign state and a member of the United Nations, therefore, the United States does not own any part of sky".*

The US F-22 pilot apparently panicked when a capable Russian Su-35 multi-role fighter approached, and immediately engaged in evasion maneuvers towards Iraqi airspace.

The general noted that the US has hitherto failed to give any explanation for these and similar activities, beyond general and illegal statements about 'owning airspace'.

Today's announcement by the MOD appears to be in response to a report in yesterday's New York Times, where US military leaders were quoted expressing concerns about a possible clash between the air forces.

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