

US “Missile Shield” in Bulgaria Threatens Russia

By [Global Research](#)

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Varied reactions have appeared in the Russian press to [Friday's announcement that Bulgaria might accept on its territory elements of the US missile defense.](#)

The reactions of leading Russian analysts and the Russian media to the possibility of including Bulgaria in the US missile shield range from outright feelings of threat to Russia's national security to thinking that the Obama Administration takes serious the threats from Iran.

The Russian paper Vzgl'yad ("View") cites the first Vice President of the Russian Academy for Geopolitical Problems, Konstantin Sivkov, as saying that the hosting of elements of the American missile defense system on Bulgarian soil "directly threatens Russia."

In the article entitled "Bulgaria Too: One More Eastern European State Expresses Desire to Host US Anti-Missile System," which reminds that Romania has already made it clear it would take in parts of the US shield, Sivkov says that after Bulgaria, the next country to make a similar announcement may be Georgia, which has already expressed similar desires.

Sivkov claims that the argument that the US missile defense in Europe will be directed against missiles from Iran and North Korea is ridiculous as none of the two states has the capacity to carry out such strikes.

"The US missile defense in Europe is being created in order to level down the Russian operational and tactical missile weapons. The USA has started creating a military infrastructure for exerting military pressure on Russia," the Russian geopolitics experts says. He does not rule out the possibility that the Americans are responding to the new military doctrine of Russia which provides for preventive nuclear strikes.

Maxim Minaev, senior expert at the Russian Center for Political Affairs is quoted as saying that the US is just following the program about the missile defense system in Europe that it announced in September 2009. He did not rule out Georgia's inclusion in the US missile shield.

"It was not clear what the new US project for a missile defense was. In its scope it envisages a much stronger structure than the one that was supposed to be in located in the Czech Republic and Poland," Minaev says.

He is certain that the words of the Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov that his government would consult the European Commission before deciding on joining the US missile shield are just a formality because the missile defense is a purely American project. Minaev does accept that the US initiative can be directed against Iran.

He is quoted as saying that Russian President Medvedev should have asked all questions that are being raised now when he met with US President Barack Obama in September 2009.

He is convinced that Moscow has missed the chance of influencing the United States over the intention to locate a theater missile defense in Europe, and that there is little Russia could do now.

According to another Russian newspaper, Kommersant, Bulgaria's PM Borisov has made it clear in advance that the Bulgarian government is not against hosting elements of the US missile shield on its soil. It points out that Bulgaria is the second European state in several days, after Romania, that says it could become involved in the US missile defense project.

"Even though it is still early to talk about the setting up of elements of the American missile defense in Bulgaria, Borisov's statements did not make the Russian Foreign Ministry very happy," the paper points out.

The Russian Foreign Ministry is quoted as saying that Moscow's position remains unchanged – Russia expects clarification on part of the United States over the planned missile defense.

The planned consultations with the Americans for analyzing missile threats have not started yet, and that only after their start Russia would be able to react to everything, Deputy Director of the Department for Information and Press of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Igor Lyakin-Frolov is quoted as saying.

Moscow has demanded from Washington clarifications regarding the US plans to locate a missile shield in Europe immediately after Romanian President Basescu said on February 4, 2010, that Romania would be willing to join the shield.

"Judging by the words of Lyakin-Frolov, neither the White House, nor the State Department of the USA have provided any clarifications to Russia with respect to the missile defense plans," Kommersant points out.

The paper says that US President Obama could clarify these issues in person during his next meeting with Medvedev at the end of March or the beginning of April, which is when the US and Russian diplomats hope to conclude the talks on the new START treaty.

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