

US-Russia Confrontation in Syria's Air Space: US F-22 Tried to Prevent Russian Warplanes from Bombing ISIS in Euphrates Valley

By [South Front](#)

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On Decembers 9, Major General Igor Konashenkov spokesman for the Ministry of Defense of Russia revealed that a F-22 warplane of the US Air Force tried to prevent two Russian Su-25 warplanes from bombing a base of ISIS on the western bank of the Euphrates River on November 23.

Later, the US F-22 withdrew when a Russian Su-35 warplane arrived to escort the two Su-25, according to Maj. Gen. Konashenkov.

"The F-22 launched decoy flares and used airbrakes while constantly maneuvering [near the Russian Su-25 warplanes], imitating an air fight ... most close-midair encounters between Russian and US jets in the area around the Euphrates River have been linked to the attempts of US aircraft to get in the way [of the Russian warplanes] striking against Islamic State terrorists," Maj. Gen Konashenkov said, according to RT.

Maj. Gen Konashenkov also denounced a statement made by Lieutenant Colonel Damien Pickart, a spokesman for the US Air Force Central Command, in which he claimed that the aerospace over the eastern bank of the Euphrates River belongs to the US-led coalition.

"We saw anywhere from six to eight incidents daily in late November, where Russian or Syrian aircraft crossed into our airspace on the east side of the Euphrates River," Lt. Col. Pickart told CNN during an interview on Decembers 9.

The spokesman of the Russian military described Lt. Col. Pickart statement as "puzzling" and stressed that Syria is a sovereign nation and a member of the UN. The general also said that the US-led coalition should focus on destroying ISIS in Iraq instead of close encounters between US and the Russian jets.

"Unlike the Russian Air Force, the US-led coalition is operating in Syria without any legal basis," Maj. Gen. Konashenkov said.

Many Syrian experts believe that these harrassments are a part of the US plan not only to stay in Syria after defeating ISIS, but also to divide the country if possible, in a way similar to the Korean Peninsula. However, this scenario is opposed by both the Syrian government

and the opposition.

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