

Defense Ministry Signs \$100M Deal to Upgrade Bombers

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Defense Ministry has signed a 3.4 billion ruble (\$103 million) contract with the Tupolev design bureau and Kazan Aircraft Plant to upgrade three Tu-160 Blackjack strategic bombers, Tupolev said Friday.

The delivery date for the supersonic, variable-geometry heavy bomber is December 31, 2015, the company said.

The ministry said last year at least 10 of the Russian Air Force's Tu-160 bombers will be modernized by 2020, after which the upgraded aircraft will remain in service until a new-generation strategic bomber known as PAK-DA is developed.

The Tu-160, which entered service in 1987 and remains the largest supersonic aircraft in the world, is designed to engage strategic targets with nuclear and conventional weapons.

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