

Russia Supplying Syria With Advanced Weaponry – Report

September 10, 2015



A Russian BTR-82A armored personnel carrier.

Russia is supplying the Syrian army with hardware including small arms, grenade launchers, advanced BTR-82A armored personnel carriers and KamAZ military trucks, Russia's Kommersant newspaper reported Thursday.

Russia says its military assistance to Damascus is aimed at helping it fight terrorism in Syria, but the West suspects Moscow is building up its military presence on the ground in Syria to prop up its long-time ally, Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Russia's state-owned arms exporter Rosoboronexport was not immediately available for comment.

Kommersant said its report was based on information from unnamed sources in the defense export sector.

It also quoted the sources as saying Syria had previously paid Moscow advances towards the

purchase of Russia's sophisticated S-300 air defense systems. It said Moscow later decided not to deliver the missile systems for now and has been delivering the other arms instead.

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