

Russian Public Hawkish on Syria, Terrorism – Poll

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Chinese and Russian special forces attend the "Friendship 2007" joint Russian-Chinese anti-terror exercise at a Russian Interior Ministry base in Balashikha outside Moscow.

Nearly half of Russians think that French authorities should respond to the terror attacks in Paris on Nov. 13, which left 130 people dead, by “stepping up its fight against IS and fostering international cooperation in combating terrorism,” according to a poll by independent Russian pollster the Levada Center, the Kommersant newspaper reported Thursday.

This course of action was supported by 44 percent of respondents, with a further 41 percent saying that France should tighten up its immigration system. A third (33 percent) thought that some form of control over France's Muslim population was necessary to prevent radicalization.

“Humanitarian” measures proved far less popular, with 5 percent of respondents believing that France needed to review its Middle Eastern policy and halt its air strikes in Syria.

An earlier Levada poll, whose results were published on the center's website on Oct. 10,

showed that 72 percent of respondents supported Russian air strikes targeting IS sites, with 33 percent saying they did so “without reservation.”

However, 39 percent responded that Russian intervention in Syria was “highly likely” to lead to a drawn-out war resembling the one fought by the U.S.S.R. in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Thirty-two percent deemed this outcome “rather unlikely.”

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