

Kerry Could Offer Putin New Information Sharing Deal on Syria – Reports

July 13, 2016

The  **Moscow Times**

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry will reportedly propose new intelligence sharing initiatives while discussing the Syrian conflict with President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, The Washington Post reported Wednesday.

Kerry is expected to present Russia with new proposals to create a joint intelligence group to share information on Jabhat al-Nusra and synchronize military strikes against the Islamic State, the newspaper wrote.

The proposal is hoped to help avoid conflicts between Russia and the U.S. over Syria. Russia is expected to persuade the Syrian government to reduce its air force activity in exchange.

Kerry has previously stated that progress in Syria will only be made if the U.S. comes to an understanding with Russia. The current cease-fire deal, agreed by Russia and the U.S. in February, allows the military to attack terrorist groups, but has reportedly lead to multiple deaths among the Syrian civilian population.

Russian air forces carried out new strikes on Islamic State camps and ammunition depots on Tuesday, in a move that was believed to be the response to the [downing](#) of Russian Mi-35M helicopter last week.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that the airstrikes, which involved six Russian Tu-22M3 strategic bombers attacking terrorists' positions, were planned as a part of Russia's ongoing military operation in Syria, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Wednesday.

"The U.S. are seeking to reboot bilateral talks on Syria in order to focus them on political issues, providing them with the opportunity to switch the power from Assad to a new opposition-backed authority," foreign policy expert Vladimir Frolov told The Moscow Times. "But this can only be done in case if the level of fighting in the country is reduced."

"Moscow is hesitating to take a step toward the current U.S. administration while continuing with military operations, so that the opposition is weakened by the time the new U.S. government comes into power," Frolov said.

The Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra are terrorist organizations banned in Russia.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/07/13/kerry-could-offer-putin-new-information-sharing-deal-on-syria-reports-a54571>