Russia Lost 550 Soldiers in 2015-2024 Syria Intervention – BBC

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Russian military in Aleppo. **Omar Sanadiki / AP / TASS**

At least 543 Russian soldiers and mercenaries were killed during Russia's almost decade-long military intervention in Syria's civil war, according to a tally by BBC Russia.

The now-restructured Wagner mercenary group reportedly accounted for 346 of the verified Russian military deaths in Syria. Their names appeared in various publicly available sources, as well as in internal Wagner documents that were leaked to journalists between 2016 and 2022.

BBC Russia said it identified the contract soldiers who were killed between October 2015 and October 2024 based on their obituaries in news publications and on social media, as well as their tombstones and war monuments.

They included at least one major general, 10 colonels, 15 lieutenant colonels, 31 majors and 61 lower-ranking officers.

Russia's defense ministry has officially confirmed the deaths of 116 contract soldiers in Syria between 2015 and 2019.

Russia intervened in the Syrian civil war in September 2015 to help then–President Bashar al-Assad crush the opposition and the Islamic State terrorist group. Assad, who was also backed by Iran, was toppled on Sunday after a two–week Islamist–led advance.

The regime change raised questions about the future of Russia's Tartus naval facility and Hmeimim airbase, which were used in Russia's operations in Syria.

The Kremlin said it was in talks with Syria's new leadership about Tartus and Hmeimim after anonymous sources told Russian news agencies that the rebels would guarantee security to Russian military and diplomatic facilities in Syria.

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