

Russian President Says Turkey's Downing of Jet a Betrayal of Friend



Moscow, November 27 (RHC)-- Russia's president says the Turkish Air Force's recent shooting down of a Russian bomber over Syria's airspace was an act of betrayal by a country Moscow considered to be its friend. Vladimir Putin made the remarks at a joint press conference with his visiting French counterpart, Francois Hollande, at the Kremlin on Friday.

It is impossible for the Turkish Air Force not to recognize Russia's planes, Putin said, noting that the United States knew where the aircraft was flying at the time it was brought down. "They [our planes] have identification signs and these are well visible," the Russian president said, adding: "Instead of [...] ensuring this never happens again, we are hearing unintelligible explanations and statements that there is nothing to apologize about."

On Tuesday, Turkish fighter jets shot down a Sukhoi Su-24M, which Ankara accuses of having violated Turkish airspace. Russia rejects that the aircraft ever entered Turkey's skies.

The aircraft's two pilots ejected as it was going down in flames. One of the pilots was killed by militants in Syria, while the second one was rescued by the Syrian army.

Putin has demanded that Ankara apologize over the incident. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has responded by saying that Turkey does not owe Russia an apology over the matter.

Addressing the press conference in Moscow, the French head of state said the two sides had agreed to exchange intelligence on Daesh and other militant groups in Syria to help improve the effectiveness of their aerial bombing campaigns in the Arab country.

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