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<http://news.antiwar.com/2016/10/10/russia-to-expand-syria-naval-base-make-it-permanent/print/>

## Russia to Expand Syria Naval Base, Make It 'Permanent'

By Jason Ditz  
October 10, 2016



45 years after its initial establishment, it's hard to imagine anyone saw the Tartus naval base in Syria as anything but "permanent," but Russian officials are looking to formally establish that fact, as well as come to an agreement with the Assad government on a substantial expansion.

The base, such as it is, is Russia's only naval base in the Mediterranean, but it is small and very limited, unable to provide access to larger warships. Russia seems keen to change that now, and with the Assad government serious indebted to Russia in the ongoing civil war, getting Syria to ratify the terms of the deal should be fairly easy for Russia.

Russian officials say the final terms of the base deal will be finished soon to be presented to Syria, and the Assad government is likely to see this as an expression of Russian commitment to the government's survival.

Russia has recently deployed an S-300 anti-aircraft missile system to the area around the Tartus base, a response to US suggestions that they may unilaterally attack Syria and Russia militarily. This too gives Russia a chance to spin the timing of this announcement as related to US threats, and a sign that Russia won't be chased out of Syria.