

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نیاشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

The Associate Press

Russia: deal to keep troops in Tajikistan in 2013

By PETER LEONARD

9/29/2012

A top Russian general said Saturday that Moscow expects to secure a deal to extend Russian military presence in the Central Asian nation of Tajikistan by the first half of 2013.

Russia's ground forces commander Vladimir Chirkin said in an interview on Ekho Mosky radio station that outstanding issues on the terms of the deal will continue to be discussed with Tajikistan until the end of March.

Some 7,000 Russian soldiers are posted across three garrisons in Tajikistan, which is a major transit point on the northbound trafficking route for Afghan heroin.

Tajikistan and other ex-Soviet neighbors of Afghanistan fear a spillover of violence in the event of a renewed outbreak of civil conflict after the NATO coalition's withdrawal in 2014.

An agreement to extend the current lease, which expires in 2014, has been delayed amid reported disagreements about the financial terms.

Chirkin said the Russian troops would work in a coalition with local forces, something that Tajikistan is believed to have pushed for during negotiations.

Tajikistan has said it would like \$300 million annually in cash or equivalent in military assistance for the bases.

"We will undoubtedly provide military and technical assistance so that this coalition is fully supplied," Chirkin said. "How large (that assistance) is to be will be calculated by the specialists."

In September, the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said the current lease might be extended by 49 years.

The Russian 201st Motorized Rifle Division deployed in Tajikistan is the largest current deployment of Russian troops abroad. It is based in garrisons near the capital, Dushanbe, and in the southern cities of Kulyab and Kurgan-Tube, both close to the Afghan border.

Russia's military presence helped negotiate an end to the five-year civil war that devastated Tajikistan in the 1990s.

Tajikistan has in recent years struggled to quell a series of relatively small-scale domestic Islamist-inspired insurgencies and stamp its authority across all regions of the largely mountainous nation of seven million people.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is due to visit Tajikistan on Oct. 5.