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Russian jet acts 'provocatively' close to US warship in Black Sea

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The United States has announced that a Russian fighter jet engaged in “provocative” acts towards the USS Donald Cook in the western Black sea.

Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren said on Monday that the SU-24 fighter jet made 12 “close-range, low-altitude” passes near the warship on Saturday.

"This provocative and unprofessional Russian action is inconsistent with their national protocols and previous agreements on the professional interaction between our militaries," Warren said.

"I have difficulty believing that two Russian pilots on their own would choose to take such an action," he added.

The move comes as tensions continue to rise between Washington and Moscow over the crisis in Ukraine.

The spokesman said the fighter jet appeared to be unarmed and did not respond to radio queries and warnings from the US warship.

"The Donald Cook is more than capable of defending herself against two Su-24s," said Warren. "The event ended without incident."

The American destroyer equipped with the powerful Aegis missile defense system was deployed in the Black Sea as Russian military monitored NATO's systematic build-up of naval forces in the region.

There have been no communications between the US defense department and the Russian ministry of defense since the incident, according to the Pentagon's spokesman.