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Russia confirms missile defence contract with Iran

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Russia confirms missile defence contract with Iran

Moscow: Amid the escalating crisis around Iran's [nuclear](#) programme, Russia said Thursday that it will still arm Tehran with missiles that can secure nuclear facilities from attacks.

"We concluded a [contract](#) for the supply of air-defence systems to Iran and there is no reason not to fulfil it," Mikhail Dmitriyev, the head of Russia's [military](#)-technical cooperation agency, told journalists here.

Worth an estimated \$700 million, the deal

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for up to 30 Tor M-1 surface-to-air missiles is the largest since Russia in 2000 withdrew from an agreement with the US restricting the supply of military hardware to Iran.

Dmitriyev rejected media reports that talks were underway for the additional supply of heavier S-300 air-defence missiles.

Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov has stressed that the Tor is a defensive system and that the sale does not violate Russia's international obligations.

The weapon is effective against [aircraft](#), cruise missiles and guided bombs.

There was no indication when the systems would be shipped to Iran.

The missiles are expected to be deployed at the nuclear research centre at Isfahan and the reactor that Russia is completing for Iran at the southern [port](#) of Bushehr.

According to Dmitriyev, Russia's overall exports of arms in 2005 were worth a record \$6.1 billion. The sales target for 2006 is \$7 billion, he added.

The main customers for [Russian](#) military hardware are China and India.

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