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Published: Thursday, July 13, 2006  
 Bylined to: [Prensa Latina](#)

## Venezuelan pilots fly Russian Sukhoi-30 fighters in brilliant combat display

**Prensa Latina:** Venezuela's Defense Minister Admiral Orlando Maniglia described maneuvers by Venezuelan pilots aboard two Russian Sukhoi-30 fighters as a brilliant air combat display.

The pilots performed complex maneuvers aboard two fighters and some helicopters at the Libertador de Maracay Air Base, in the presence of high ranking officers.

**Maniglia praised the exhibits of the French Mirage warplanes and US F-16 bombers, as well as Russian search-rescue gunship choppers, making it clear they will protect Venezuelan sovereignty and they are not weapons of mass destruction.**

- *It was an ode to piloting and aviation, he noted.*

**The minister said Venezuela is engaged in financial and technical details for procurement of 24 SU-30, which he considered necessary for present and future military aviation parameters.**

The F-16 and Mirage fighters had their prime 25 years ago, but now it is more feasible to purchase Russian planes because the US has regrettably precluded us from equipping and repairing theirs, he said.

**The SU-30s have a 200-kilometer launching capacity, exceeding the F-16's 70-kilometer range.**

*Venezuela's military modernization includes the purchase of 100,000 AK-103 rifles and MI-17V-5, MI-35M and MI-26T helicopters from Russia.*

[Aviation in Venezuela Ode to Piloting](#)


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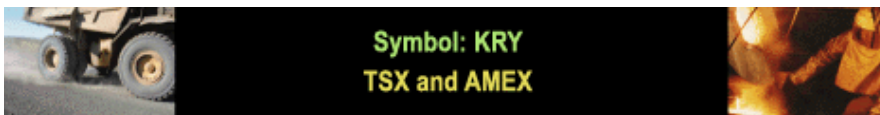
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-- Roy S. Carson, Editor/Publisher [Editor@VHeadline.com](mailto:Editor@VHeadline.com)

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