

## Russia's new defense machine, the Terminator, marks new generation of Russian weaponry

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### The capacity of the new tank support vehicle doubles the efficiency of six armored vehicles and 40 soldiers

The Russia army is taking a new military vehicle in the arsenal – the Terminator. Such a strange name has been given to the new tank support vehicle. At the end of 2004, when Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov was talking about new generations of the Russian arms that were planned to be added to the arsenal in 2005, he was talking about the Terminator too.

Specialists of the Ural Transport Machine-Building Design Bureau developed the new machine – the enterprise is a division of Uralvagonzavod, which is Russia's largest tank-maker.

Military specialists say that the capacity of the new tank support vehicle doubles the efficiency of six armored vehicles and 40 soldiers. Testing procedures for the latest development of the Russian defense industry are about to be over, a spokesman for the defense ministry's administration for armored vehicles, Nikolai Kovalev said.



"The use of the new machine in a tank battalion will add up to 30 percent of efficiency to the detachment. The tank support vehicle is capable of firing at three targets on a battlefield simultaneously," General Kovalev said.

The concept to develop the new tank support machine for the Russian army appeared from life experience itself. The storming of the Chechen capital of Grozny on January 1, 1995 resulted in a tragedy for the Russian federal forces. Chechen gunmen destroyed hundreds of Russian tanks and other armored vehicles in narrow streets and quarters of the city.

Russian military specialists were originally going to solve the tank support problem with the help of self-propelled anti-aircraft systems known as Shilka. Four 23-millimeter guns could provide appropriate defense and fire efficiency. However, Shilka systems are not armored because they were not developed for offensive actions. In addition, Shilka does not have the most important quality at this point – it cannot destroy tanks.

The new vehicle is capable of overcoming three-meter ditches and breaching 1.5-meter walls.

Specialists of the US Armed Forces are also working on the question to develop a new armored vehicle to replace a not very successful M-2 Bradley machine.

Spokesmen for the Israeli Defense Ministry evinced interest in the new Russian tank support machine during a military technological show in the city of Nizhni Tagil. Israeli officials said that they would like to conclude a contract with Russia to acquire new machines for their Merkava tanks that were used for scouring procedures in Palestinian settlements. They later said, however, that Israeli specialists would be able to develop a similar machine themselves.

The new Russian machine as the latest military technological development is not regulated with the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). The Terminator is a vehicle of a new class. The CFE Treaty stipulates certain restrictions for the number of units of weaponry in Europe.

Russia has a right to have 6,350 tanks and 11,280 armored vehicles on its territory. These terms are acceptable for Russia – they provide the necessary numeral parity with the armed forces of European NATO members. In connection with the conflict situation in the Caucasus, Russian diplomats were going to ask European authorities for certain concessions. The appearance of the Terminator makes such an intention useless, because the class of the new machine is not mentioned in legal documents of the CFE Treaty. Terminator is neither a tank, nor an armored vehicle. These peculiarities will inevitably lead to numerous discussions as far as the Terminator's class is concerned. Russia has a right to use as many Terminators as needed in the Caucasus until European authorities introduce certain amendments to the CFE Treaty. It is noteworthy, though, that the Russian treasury might not be able to handle this issue.

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