

POLISH MiG-29 FIGHTERS INVOLVED IN AN EXERCISE IN BULGARIA

For the first time in history, 40 Polish pilots, along with the MiG-29 fighters, flew to Bulgaria, in order to participate in a training exercise.

For the first time in history of mutual military cooperation between Poland and Bulgaria, 40 Polish aviators, along with the MiG-29 fighter jets, coming from the Minsk Mazowiecki 23rd Tactical Air Base, were deployed to Bulgaria, in order to take part in a training exercise. The training is going to last for two weeks, and it is being realized at the Graf Ignatievo airbase.

The Polish component, detached in order to take part in the exercise, is commanded by Col. Maciej Trelka, the commander of the 23rd TAB. During the exercise, the training activities are going to include intercepts and basic fighter maneuvers. The Polish and Bulgarian personnel will get a chance to exchange experiences and to compare the skills possessed by the allied pilots, flying the same type of aircraft. The Polish pilots will return home on 9th October.

At the end of August this year, a Polish-Bulgarian memorandum of understanding was signed, covering the military and industrial cooperation. The document constitutes a legal basis to carry out modernizations and overhauls of the Bulgarian MiG-29 fighters in Poland, at the WZL-2 and WZL-4 facilities [Military Aviation Works No. 2 and No. 4], under the supervision of the Polish Air Force and the Air Force Institute of Technology. Besides the overhauls, the memorandum is also related to cooperation within the scope of military training - and the Polish visit at the Graf Ignatievo base is the first step taken, in order to realize the provisions of the aforesaid document.

READ MORE: [MiG-29 Overhauls in Poland. Memorandum Regulating The Military Cooperation.](#)

For the Bulgarians, the most important element of the cooperation is placed within the opportunity to carry out overhauls and modernization of the MiG-29 jet fighters at the Polish facilities. The agreements with the Russian companies, which - up until now - were dealing with repairs of the Bulgarian jets, are going to expire at the end of September. Additionally, according to the Bulgarian authorities, these contracts are financially detrimental, making Sofia dependent on Moscow.

RSK MiG CEO, Sergey Korotkov, in a letter addressed to the chairman of the defence committee of the Bulgarian parliament, quoted by "Standart", that "Poland has no license and no access to the up to date documentation pertaining the MiG-29 overhauls". He warned the Bulgarians that, should the overhauls be executed in Poland, the agreement is going to be terminated. As mentioned above, the Bulgarian authorities are willing to become independent from the Russian Federation, within the

scope of maintenance of their equipment.

At the moment, the exercise in Bulgaria involves the MiG-29M fighters, modernized at the Military Aviation Works No. 2.