

Russia increases its expenditure on re-equipping the army

The Russian government has declared that in autumn, it will pass the state programme for re-armament for the years 2010 to 2020. According to a statement from the Russian government, the programme foresees an increase in expenditure on equipping armed forces with new hardware of 150%. This information was passed on to the media on 19 July by the vice-minister of defence, Vladimir Popovkin. This means that despite the ongoing budget deficit, Russia is determined to develop its military potential and modernise its armed forces.

Expenditure on the government's programme of rearmament for the years 2010 to 2020 will be increased by one and a half times, and over the first three years will reach around US\$67bn. During the next decade, the Ministry of Defence intends to push through a programme for modernising the army and replacing outdated hardware. Popovkin listed the priority goals to which funds from the state rearmament programme will be allotted; strategic nuclear forces, warning systems for missile attack, air and space defence, space intelligence, automated systems for military command, and military air transport.

The rise in expenditure on the army has already been approved by the finance ministry. On 29 July, the deputy premier and minister of finances Aleksey Kudrin gave top priority to this section of the budget, and declared that in accordance with the guidelines of the government budget project for the next three years, expenditure on national defence will grow and reach the sum of US\$67bn in 2013. <mz>