

CHINESE AND RUSSIAN MISSILE DEFENSE: STRATEGIES AND CAPABILITIES



China and Russia are developing increasingly capable and numerous missile defense systems, and integrating them into their defense strategies as they compete with the United States.



CHINESE STRATEGY AND CAPABILITIES

- ▶ Effective missile defense is a key capability of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) military ambitions, and of growing importance to its posture in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ▶ According to the PRC's 2019 Defense White Paper, "... the PLAAF [People's Liberation Army Air Force] is accelerating the transition of its tasks from territorial air defense to both offensive and defensive operations, and improving its capabilities for strategic early warning, air strikes, [and] air and missile defense..."
- ▶ The PRC has utilized Russian-developed missile defense systems while indigenously producing its own increasingly capable missile defenses and radars.
- ▶ The PRC's missile defense capabilities are focused on regional threats but appear to be developing towards countering long-range missiles.



RUSSIAN STRATEGY AND CAPABILITIES

- ▶ Russia is developing a layered missile defense to enhance its anti-access/area denial capabilities, preserve its nuclear deterrent, and ensure regime survival.
- ▶ Homeland missile defenses centered around Moscow have been in operation since the 1960s and, at one point, utilized 100 launchers as allowed by the ABM Treaty.
- ▶ Moscow is developing a range of missile defense systems that it claims will have the capability to intercept cruise missiles and hypersonic vehicles.

CHINESE AND RUSSIAN BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE CAPABILITIES

		CAPABILITY AGAINST			
		MRBM	IRBM	ICBM/ SLBM	
DEPLOYED SYSTEMS	S-300 SAM Russian PMU-2 and VM variants can counter MRBMs China purchased S-300 PMU-2 in 2010	✓			
	S-400 SAM Can counter MRBMs approaching 3,500km in range China purchased S-400 in 2014	✓			
	A-135 Moscow ABM System Initial deployment 1989 – replacement for system that began in 1960s 68 nuclear-armed interceptors Recent upgrades to fire control radar and updated electronics	✓	✓	✓	
DEVELOPMENTAL SYSTEMS	HQ-19 Missile Defense System Good capability against MRBMs at IOC, anticipated after 2021 Built-in potential for future upgrades to intercept longer-range systems	✓	✓	✓	
	S-500 SAM Good capability against MRBMs at IOC, anticipated in 2025 Built-in potential for future upgrades to intercept longer-range systems	✓	✓	✓	
	Mid Course Interceptor IOC unlikely before late-2020s, good initial capability against IRBMs Upgradeable to intercept ICBMs/SLBMs potentially	✓	✓	✓	
	51T6 Follow-On Exoatmospheric Interceptor IOC anticipated late 2020s – mid-2030s Likely to have capability against IRBMs and ICBMs/SLBMs	✓	✓	✓	

ABM: Anti-Ballistic Missile **ICBM:** Intercontinental Ballistic Missile **SAM:** Surface to Air Missile
MRBM: Medium Range Ballistic Missile **IRBM:** Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile **SLBM:** Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile
IOC: Initial Operational Capability *Information compiled by OSD, Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy

PERFORMANCE:
 ✓ = Marginal ✓ = Good ✓ = Future Potential