

## Official: Russia helping Iran defend air

by UPI

MOSCOW -- The Russian deputy foreign minister said Thursday his country is helping Iran strengthen its air defenses. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov said in response to a request for a comment on Iran's announcement that it is buying advanced S-300 air defense missile systems from Russia that he didn't have concrete information on the sale but confirmed that Russia is working with Iran to strengthen Tehran's air defenses, RIA Novosti reported Thursday. "I know we are assisting in work to reinforce Iran's air defense systems," Losyukov said. "I have no concrete information on the issue and can make no comment whatsoever on the type of (military) hardware," he said. His comments followed Iranian Defense Minister Mostafa Mohammad Najjar's announcement Wednesday that his country has signed a contract with Russia to purchase and deploy the missile systems. He didn't reveal details of the deal.

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