

Russia, US to hold military talks over Syria: Pentagon

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Washington: Russia and the US are expected to hold military talks over Syria, where both countries have been conducting airstrikes against Islamic State (IS) militants, as soon as this weekend, the Pentagon said.

"The department of defense (DOD) has received a formal response from the Russian ministry of defense regarding DOD's proposal to ensure safe air operations over Syria," Xinhua quoted Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook as saying on Friday.

The Russian response is be reviewed and "talks are likely to take place as soon as this weekend".

The response came as Russian's airstrikes in Syria that began last week raised US concerns that possible clashes could happen in the air, as the US-led coalition continued to combat the IS in Syria.

The US also accused Russia of conducting crowded and sometimes uncoordinated air raids in Syria, saying Russia is mainly striking Syria's anti-government rebels in support of its ally, President Bashar al-Assad.

Moscow has, however, denied such allegations, saying that it has no political agenda in Syria and that its bombing of the IS positions is in line with the US priority.

The first round of talks, held on October 1, between defence officials in Moscow and Washington to discuss how to de-conflict air operations between the two countries brought little result, according to US media.

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