



# Defense Acquisition in Russia and China

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Russia and China have sought to modernize their legacy defense equipment while concurrently developing new and increasingly sophisticated systems of their own. This report discusses recent research into the research, development, and acquisition processes of Russia and China—both doctrinally and in practice—and identifies areas in which each country excels and where each country has challenges.



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do Russia and China approach defense acquisitions according to doctrine?
2. How do Russia and China approach defense acquisitions in practice?
3. What limits Russia’s and China’s ability to acquire new weapon systems?
4. How do Russia and China excel with respect to developing new weapon systems?



## KEY FINDINGS

Russia maintains a large arms export market but struggles to produce its most sophisticated systems in strategically significant quantities

- Russia’s State Armaments Program–2020 was successful insofar as it was adequately funded, managing to retrofit much of its legacy Soviet equipment to modern standards.
- The next SAP’s goals will be harder to accomplish because it calls for the procurement of new and highly sophisticated systems in large quantities. Complete execution of the plan is unlikely without increases in manufacturing capability, funding, and political will.

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China appears to be on a path to mitigating some of its historical shortcomings in RDA execution

- China's reliance on intellectual property theft means its weapons are years behind, but the Chinese recognize that shortcoming and are investing in and growing their organic capabilities through joint ventures and acquisition of foreign technology.
- China's inability to manufacture highly sophisticated parts continues to limit its status as a first-rate developer and producer of state-of-the-art military materiel, but progress is apparent.
- Successfully developing an indigenous aircraft engine and producing it in large quantities will signal a turning point in the capabilities of the Chinese defense industry.



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