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Through Sudanese Skies: The Syria–Africa Air Bridge in Consular Paperwork

Russia's air bridge to Africa was running through Sudan years before Assad fell. Also here: 686 overflight notes from the author's own desk in Khartoum, two January 2018 notes on military cargo to Bangui, and the route after Syria.

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December 14, 2025

The Russian air bridge to Africa did not appear after the fall of Assad. This report, dated December 14, 2025, shows from the author's own consular paperwork that it was already running through Sudanese airspace in 2018. As a diplomat in Khartoum, he prepared the overflight requests for every Russia-linked aircraft crossing Sudan, working from flight data sent by Moscow over secure channels.

686 notes on the Russian air bridge to Africa

The report draws on the author's surviving database of 686 notes to the Sudanese foreign ministry. It traces direct flights from Khmeimim to Bangui, routes linking Khartoum, Latakia and Benghazi, a near-monthly Defense Ministry shuttle between Latakia and Khartoum, and a flight declared as removing diplomatic property from Sudan and Libya. Two notes from January 2018 are quoted in detail.

“ They document a direct military air bridge from Khmeimim (Syria) to Bangui in January 2018. Note No. 1 of January 11, 2018 (flight RFF-8783, an Il-76) describes the delivery of “military-technical equipment” from Khmeimim to Bangui, up to 22 tons per flight, with the Russian Ministry of Defense as sender and the CAR Ministry of Defense as recipient. Note No. 18 of January 30, 2018 (marked “urgent”) records that “the Russian Air Force is continuing the delivery of military-technical equipment (146.5 tons)” by Il-76 to Bangui airport, with reference to UN Security Council Resolution 2339 (2017) and clearance with the 2127 Sanctions Committee.

Sergey Konyashin, Through Sudanese Skies: The Syria–Africa Air Bridge in Consular Paperwork (From the Inside, Démarche, December 14, 2025)

The report explains what these documents prove and what they do not, including how they relate to Wagner.

Seven years later

The second part follows the corridor after Assad’s fall: the suspension of flights to Khmeimim, the move to Haftar’s airfields in Libya, and the partial return to Syria after October 2025. It argues that the Russian air bridge to Africa explains why Moscow fought so hard over Khmeimim and why the Port Sudan base project took the shape it did.

What the report is based on

Original consular documents from the author’s service at the Russian embassy in Sudan, together with open reporting on the period after December 2024.

ABOUT

I am Sergey Konyashin, a former Russian diplomat. I spent nearly a dozen years in the Russian Foreign Ministry, with postings in Yemen (2010–2013), Sudan (2014–2018) and Algeria (2019–2021), and left Russia in 2022, after Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Démarche is my independent journal on Russian policy in the Middle East and Africa: analysis from inside the system, for readers outside it. I also write for *The Moscow Times*, *Republic*, *The Insider* and other independent outlets; see konyashin.com/elsewhere for that work.

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