

**Memorandum from Malinovsky and Zakharov on deployment of
Soviet Forces to Cuba, 24 May 1962**

Top Secret
Special Importance
One Copy

To the Chairman of the Defense Council

Comrade N.S. Khrushchev

In accordance with your instructions the Ministry of Defense proposes:

1. To deploy on the island of Cuba a Group of Soviet Forces comprising all branches of the Armed Forces, under a single integrated staff of the Group of Forces headed by a Commander in Chief of Soviet forces in Cuba.

2. To send to Cuba the 43rd Missile Division (commander of the division Major General Statsenko) comprising five missile regiments:

— The 79th, 181st and 664th R-12 [SS-4] missile regiments with eight launchers each, in all 24 launchers.

— The 665th and 668th R-14 [SS-5] missile regiments with eight launchers each, in all 16 launchers.

— In all, 40 R-12 and R-14 launchers.

With the missile units to send 1.5 missiles and 1.5 warheads per each launcher (in all 60 missiles and 60 warheads), with one field missile technical base (PRTB) per regiment for equipping the warheads and rocket fuel in mobile tanks with 1.75 loadings per R-12 missile and 1.5 per R-14 missile at each launcher.

Deployment of the R-12 missiles is planned in the [illegible] variant with the use of SP-6. Prepared assembly-disassembly elements of the SP-6 for equipping the missile pads will be prepared at construction enterprises of the Ministry of Defense by 20 June and shipped together with the regiments. Upon arrival at the designated locations, personnel of the missile regiments will within ten days equip the launch positions by their own efforts, and will be ready to launch missiles.

For deployment of the missile units armed with R-14 missiles, construction on site will last about four months. This work can be handled by the personnel of the units, but it will be necessary to augment them with a group of 25 engineer-construction personnel and 100 construction personnel of basic specialties and up to 100 construction fitters from State Committees of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for defense technology and radioelectronics.

For accomplishing the work it is necessary to send:

— 16 complete sets of earth equipment for the R-14 produced by [the machine] industry in the current year;

— machinery and vehicles:

Mobile cranes (5 ton)	— 10
Bulldozers	— 20
Mobile graders	— 10
Excavators	— 10
Dump trucks	— 120
Cement mixers (GVSU)	— 6

Special technical equipment for [illegible] and testing apparatuses

— Basic materials

Cement	— 2,000 tons
Reinforced concrete	— 15,000 sq. meters (not counting access roads)
Metal	— 2,000 tons
SP-6 sets	— 30
GR-2 Barracks	— 20
Prefabricated wooden houses	— 10
Cable, equipment and other materials.	

Further accumulation of missile fuel, missiles, and warheads for the units is possible depending on the creation of reserve space and storage in Cuba, inasmuch as it would be possible to include in each missile regiment a third battalion with four launchers. The staff of the Group and of the missile division can expediently be sent from the Soviet Union in the first days of July 1962 in two echelons: the 1st echelon (R-12 regiments) and the 2nd (R-14 regiments).

3. For air defense of the island of Cuba and protection of the Group of Forces to send 2 antiaircraft divisions, including in their composition 6 antiaircraft missile regiments (24 battalions), 6 technical battalions, one fighter air regiment with MiG-21 F-13 (three squadrons — 40 aircraft), and two radar battalions.

With the divisions to ship 4 missiles per launcher, in all 576 [SAM] missiles.

To send the antiaircraft divisions: one in July, and one in August, 1962.

4. For defense of coasts and bases in the sectors of probable enemy attack on the island of Cuba to send one regiment of Sopka ["little volcano"] comprising three battalions (6 launchers) with three missiles per launcher

- on the coast in the vicinity of Havana, one regiment (4 launchers)
- on the coast in the vicinity of Banes, one battalion (2 launchers)

On the southern coast in the vicinity of Cienfuegos to locate one battalion (2 launchers), [already] planned for delivery to Cuba in 1962.

The Sopka complex is capable of destroying surface ships at a range of up to 80 km.

5. To send to Cuba as part of the Group of Forces:

— a brigade of missile patrol boats of the class Project 183-R, comprising two units with 6 patrol boats in each (in all 12 patrol boats), each armed with two P-15 [*Translator's Note: NATO SS-N-2 Styx*] missiles with a range up to 40 km.;

— a detachment of support ships comprising: 1 tanker, 2 dry cargo transports, and 4 repair afloat ships;

— fuel for missiles: fuel for the R-13 [*Translator's Note: NATO SS-N-4 Sark*] and P-15 — 70 tons, oxidizer for the R-13 — 180 tons, oxidizer for the P-15 — 20 tons, kerosene for the S-2 and KSShCh [*Translator's Note: probably NATO SA-N-1 Goa*] — 60 tons;

— two combat sets of the P-15 missile (24 missiles) and one for the R-13 (21 missiles).

Shipment of the missile patrol boats Project 183-R class, the battalions of Sopka, technical equipment for the missile patrol boats and technical batteries for the Sopka battalions, and also the missiles, missile fuel, and other equipment for communications to be carried on ships of the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet.

Shipment of the warheads, in readiness state 4, will be handled by ships of the Navy.

6. To send as part of the Group of Forces in Cuba in July-August:

— Two regiments of FKR (16 launchers) with PRTB, with their missiles and 5 special [*Translator's Note: nuclear*] warheads for each launcher. Range of the FKR is up to 180 km.;

— A mine-torpedo aviation regiment with IL-28 aircraft, comprising three squadrons (33 aircraft) with RAT-52 jet torpedoes (150 torpedoes), and air dropped mines (150 mines) for destruction of surface ships;

— An Mi-4 helicopter regiment, two squadrons, 33 helicopters;

— A separate communications [liaison] air squadron (two IL-14, five Li-2, four Yak-12, and two An-2 aircraft).

7. With the objective of combat security of our technical troops, to send to Cuba four separate motorized rifle regiments, with a tank battalion in each, at the expense of the 64th Guards Motorized Rifle Division in the Leningrad Military District, with an overall personnel strength of 7300. The regiments to be sent in June-July 1962.

8. Upon completion of the concentration of Soviet troops planned for Cuba, or in case of necessity, to send to Cuba on a friendly visit, tentatively in September:

A) A squadron of surface ships of the Navy under the command of Vice Admiral G.S. Abashvili (deputy commander of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet) comprising:

- two cruisers, Mikhail Kutuzov (Black Sea Fleet) and Sverdlov (Red Banner Baltic Fleet);
- two missile destroyers of the Project 57-bis class, the Boikii and Gnevny (Black Sea Fleet);
- two destroyers of the Project 76 class, the Skromnyi and Svedushchii (Northern Fleet);

Along with the squadron to send one refueling tanker. On the ships to send one full combat set of standard ammunition (including one combat set of KSShch missiles – 24 missiles) and standard equipment. Sailing time of the ships 15 days.

- B) A squadron of submarines, comprising:
- 18th Division of missile submarines of the Project 629 class [*Translator's Note: NATO Golf or G-class*] (7 submarines each with 3 R-13 [SS-N-4] missiles with range of 540 km.);
 - a brigade of torpedo submarines of Project 641 class [NATO: Foxtrot or F-class] (4 submarines with torpedo armament);
 - two submarine tenders.

Sailing time for the submarines, 20-22 days.

If necessary, the squadrons can be sent separately. Time for preparation to depart, after 1 July, is 10 days.

Upon arrival of the squadrons in Cuba, they would be incorporated into the Group of Soviet Forces.

9. For rear area security of the Group of Forces in Cuba to send:
- three hospitals (200 beds each);
 - one anti-epidemic sanitary detachment;
 - seven warehouses (2 for food, 1 for general storage, 4 for fuel, including two for automotive and aviation fuel and two for liquid fuel for the Navy);
 - one company for servicing a trans-shipping base;
 - one field bakery factory;

- Create reserves:
- in the Group — fuel and provisions for routine maintenance of the troops for three months;
 - in the troops — mobile (fuel, ammunition, provisions) by established norms;
 - for follow-up secure provisions for 25 days.

10. The overall number of the Group of Soviet Forces in Cuba will be about 44,000 military personnel and 1300 workers and civilians. For transport of the troops and combat equipment in summertime a simultaneous lift of about 70-80 ships of the Ministry of the Maritime Fleet of the USSR will be required.

11. To establish a staff of the Group of Soviet Forces in Cuba to command the Soviet troops. To form the staff of the Group convert the staff of the 49th Missile Army from Vinnitsa, which has a well qualified integrated apparatus with support and service elements. To incorporate into the staff of the Group a naval section, an air force section, and an air defense section. The Commander in Chief of the Group to have four deputies— one for general matters, one for the Navy (VMF), one for Air Defense (PVO), and one for the Air Force (VVS).

12. The form of dress envisioned for the troops sent to Cuba, except for the Navy, is one set of civilian clothes and one tropical uniform (as for troops in the Turkestan Military District).

13. Food for the personnel of the Group of Soviet Forces in Cuba will be arranged from the USSR.

14. Financial support will be paid on the same general basis as for other troops located abroad.

15. Measures for creation of the Group of Soviet Forces in Cuba will proceed under the codename Anadyr.

We request your review.

[signature]
R. Malinovsky

[signature]
M. Zakharov

24 May 1962

Prepared in one copy
on seven pages, no draft
Attested Colonel General S.P. Ivanov
[signature]

[The memorandum translated above and dated 24 May 1962, was the first general plan for the deployment of Soviet nuclear missiles to Cuba prepared by the General Staff, in response to a request by Khrushchev after a May 21 meeting of the Defense Council. It was discussed at a CPSU Presidium (Politburo) meeting on May 24 and unanimously approved; see the translation that follows of the only record of that meeting, and of a follow-on meeting of 25 May, both entered in a hasty scrawl by Colonel General S.P. Ivanov, chief of the Main Operations Directorate of the General Staff and Secretary of the Defense Council, on the back of the May 24 memorandum. As noted, the decision of the Presidium was to approve the planned deployment, subject to Castro's agreement. After the Soviet delegation returned from Havana, another Presidium meeting was held

*on June 10, and finally approved the General Staff memorandum. This approval was also noted briefly by General Ivanov on the same back page of the original (and only) copy of the May 24 memorandum. In addition, on June 10 all members of the Presidium signed this original memorandum, writing across the first page on top of the text (not all of the signatures are legible, but it does indeed appear to be the entire membership of the Presidium). Ivanov's notations are not fully readable, not only because of illegibility, but also because General Volkogonov's photocopy of the document from the General Staff Archive was askew and the right side of the page was not reproduced. This is, however, the only copy available at this time. It is translated below. There also follows below a chart prepared by the General Staff, showing the organization of the Group of Forces as of June 20 and identifying the units designated to be sent. (Several of the unit members were subsequently changed to enhance security.) It is not known for whom the chart was prepared, probably the General Staff itself. It was made in only one copy and was found in the General Staff archive. It has previously been available, but only in the Institute of Military History 1994 study of the crisis, *Na krayu propasti [On the Brink]*, published in only thirty copies.—R.G.]*

[Source: Volkogonov Papers, Library of Congress, reprinted in Cold War International History Project Bulletin 11. Translated by Raymond Garthoff.]