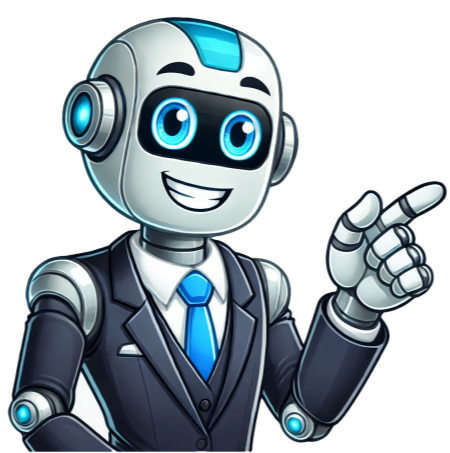


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studying a concept for a gigantic new, truck-towed cannon that could fire shells as far as 1,000 miles. While larger in scale than any existing artillery piece, the Strategic Long-Range Cannon doesn't actually require much in the way of new technology, Col. John Rafferty, who in 2018 led the Army's long-range-fires modernization effort, told Breaking Defense. Rafferty said the new gun would borrow elements of existing 155-millimeter cannons. "I don't want to oversimplify, [but] it's a bigger one of those," Rafferty said. "We're scaling up things that we're already doing." The ground-combat branch also is working with the Navy to develop a common hypersonic glide vehicle, which would launch atop a rocket then travel 1,400 miles or farther at a top speed exceeding Mach five. The ERCA is a tactical weapon that's most suitable for directly supporting nearby forces. Farther-firing HIMARS and MLRS launchers give the Army some ability to hit enemy forces well behind the front line. The conceptual thousand-mile cannon and the in-development hypersonic missile, by contrast, could allow the Army to strike targets such as staging bases, logistical networks and air bases — targets that, before, were the sole responsibility of Air Force and Navy planes and missiles. Targeting could pose a problem for these far-away targets. According to Breaking Defense, the Army is working on artificial intelligence and wireless networks so its howitzers and rocket-launchers can receive target coordinates from the service's own drones as well as from drones, spy planes and satellites belonging to the other armed services. David Axe served as Defense Editor of the National Interest. He is the author of the graphic novels "War Fix," "War Is Boring" and "Machete Squad." This article is being republished due to reader interest. Image: Flickr. Related Articles June 18, 2025 June 18, 2025 June 18, 2025 The Russian army will begin testing its self-propelled "Coalition-SV" howitzer next year, Izvestia revealed, citing sources. The outlet added that the trials of the 152 mm howitzer, claimed to have the world's longest firing range, will be wrapped up by September next year. Depending on the outcome, the state commission will decide whether to sign a development contract for the weapon. The military department will study the documents provided by the commission and decide whether to induct the howitzer by December 2022. 'Fully-Automated' Platform According to the outlet, the "fully-automated" platform, based on the T-90 tank chassis, is activated by the press of a button. A robot delivers the shells and an onboard computer loads them. The gun was first unveiled at the 2015 Moscow Victory Day Parade to replace the 2S19 "Msta-S" self-propelled howitzer. The Coalition's firing range of 70-80 km (43-50 miles) is more than double that of the 2S19 at 30 km (18.6 miles). The gun's range is on par with the American Extended Range Cannon Artillery, currently under development. The weapon reportedly fired its longest shot this year at 43.5 miles (70 km) using an M982A1 Excalibur guided artillery shell. Highest Rate-of-Fire However, the Russian gun's firing rate of 16 rounds per minute outmatches its Western counterparts by a wide margin. The American gun has a stated firing rate of 3-10 rounds per minute. The Coalition is equipped with an alcohol solution-based cooling system which prevents it from overheating during intense firing. The platform also comes with a remote-controlled 12.7 mm Kord machine gun. Moreover, the gun's automated command and control system allows it to receive "target designations from external sources - scouts, aviation and drones." Citing military expert Alexei Khlopotov, the outlet wrote that the gun "can destroy important targets deep behind enemy lines" such as "enemy command posts, air defense and missile defense systems, field airfields, supply lines and roadways." It added that the gun's "high mobility and rate of fire allows effective counter-battery combat, while remaining invulnerable to enemy artillery."