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Russia tests 'world's most powerful vacuum bomb'

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Russia said today it had tested the world's most powerful vacuum bomb.

"Test results of the new airborne weapon have shown that its efficiency and power is commensurate with a nuclear weapon," Alexander Rukshin, deputy head of Russia's armed force chief of staff, told Russia's ORT First Channel television.

"You will now see it in action, the bomb which has no match in the world is being tested at a military site," the report said. It showed a Tupolev Tu-160 strategic bomber dropping the bomb over a testing ground. A large explosion followed.

A vacuum bomb, or fuel-air explosive, causes widespread devastation.

A typical bomb of that type is dropped or fired, the first explosive charge bursts open the container at a predetermined height and disperses the fuel in a cloud that mixes with oxygen.

A second charge ignites the cloud, which can engulf objects or buildings.

"At the same time, I want to stress that the action of this weapon does not contaminate the environment, in contrast to a nuclear one."

Reuters

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The test of the huge vacuum bomb is shown in this undated television image shown by Russian Channel One. Inset, the bomb before the blast. television.