

Putin Oversees Russia's Latest Missile Test

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President Vladimir Putin oversaw test launches of Russian military rockets on Thursday during training exercises held across Russia the day before celebrations of the anniversary of its World War Two victory.

"We are carrying out tests of the readiness of the Russian armed forces. It was announced in November last year," he told journalists at the Defense Ministry, alongside Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu.

"The exercises will involve all branches of the armed forces across the country," he said.

The training exercises, which are due to include ground troops and artillery as well as the air force, were held during a summit of heads of state of a security bloc made up of former Soviet states.

A military source said the exercises were not connected to events in Ukraine.

The West has accused Russia of using previous military exercises to build up forces along the border with Ukraine after the ousting of former Moscow-backed president Viktor Yanukovich.

Putin said on Wednesday Russia had withdrawn forces from the Ukrainian border.

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