

# Putin Drinks Vodka to Russian Soldiers in North Caucasus

By [Reuters](#)

September 13, 2019



[kremlin.ru](http://kremlin.ru)

Russian President Vladimir Putin raised a shot of vodka to Russian soldiers on Thursday, while visiting the town of Botlikh in the southern Russian republic of Dagestan.

Putin promised to visit Dagestan in June during annual phone-in conference. Botlikh resident said that Putin, then-Prime Minister visited the region during the days of armed conflict in the south of Russia in 1999. Putin raised a shot of vodka but did not drink it, promising to return after "the terrorists are defeated."

**Embed:**

Russia fought major campaigns against separatists in 1994-1996 and 1999-2000 in Chechnya, a province located in the Caucasus Mountains on Russia's border with Georgia.

Many anti-Moscow fighters from those wars now live in exile and are at odds with the pro-Russian authorities in Chechnya.

Original url:

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