

Putin Declares 'Partial' Mobilization Amid Ukraine Losses, Warns West of Nuclear Response

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Updates with Putin quotes, Shoigu speech.

Russian President Vladimir Putin [declared](#) a “partial” military mobilization in Russia during a televised address Wednesday morning, vowing to use “all means necessary” to achieve Russia's aims against Ukraine and the West.

“Mobilization measures will begin today, Sept. 21,” Putin said.

The move comes after major battlefield losses suffered by the Russian army in Ukraine and as Kyiv presses onward with its sweeping counteroffensive in the northeast.

Putin said he would inform lawmakers of both houses of Russia’s parliament in writing later Wednesday.

“Only those citizens currently in the reserve will be subject to a call-up for military service, first and foremost those who have served in the ranks of the Armed Forces,” Putin said in the pre-recorded footage.

In a televised address minutes after Putin had finished speaking, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that 300,000 Russian reservists will be called up for service as part of the “partial” mobilization.

Related article: [Explainer: What Does Russia’s ‘Partial Mobilization’ Mean?](#)

Putin justified the decision by describing fierce battles for the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine and claiming that the West was encouraging Ukraine to attack Russian territory.

“In Washington, London and Brussels they are directly pushing Kyiv to shift the military action to our territory... they talk about how all available means should be used to destroy Russia on the battlefield with the ensuing loss of political, economic, cultural and all types of sovereignty and the total plundering of our country,” Putin said.

He also threatened a response to what he called the West's “nuclear blackmail” against Moscow.

“I’m not talking about Western-encouraged shelling of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, which threatens nuclear disaster, but also senior representatives of leading NATO states allowing the possibility and admissibility of using weapons of mass destruction against Russia, nuclear weapons.”

“Those who allow themselves such statements on Russia, I’d like to remind you that our country has various [weapons] of destruction, more advanced than NATO countries,” he continued.

“When the territorial integrity of our country is threatened, we will certainly use all the means at our disposal to protect Russia and our people. This is not a bluff.”

Embed:

Putin announced a partial mobilization in Russia. (English subtitles available)
pic.twitter.com/WxrhB03GB3

— Giorgi Revishvili (@revishvilig) [September 21, 2022](#)

Shoigu later said: “We’re killing, killing and killing, and that time has come: we’re at war with the collective West.”

A decree on mobilization subsequently [published](#) on the Kremlin’s website stated that mobilized soldiers’ contracts will not expire “until the end of the partial mobilization,” with

only age, health and imprisonment listed as possible exceptions.

All those sent to fight in Ukraine will receive the same salaries and bonuses as those who sign a military contract to serve in the Armed Forces and mobilized men will undergo extra training, Putin said.

The mobilization decree is vague so as to give the Defense Ministry the option to mobilize even more than the 300,000 men announced by Shoigu, [according to](#) Pavel Chikov, a human rights advocate who has been helping Russian soldiers opposed to the war.

“In reality, the Russian Defense Ministry will decide which men, where and in what quantities to send to the war,” he wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

“It will work in the following way: the Defense Ministry will draw up quotas for each Russian region and governors will be responsible for filling them.”

Related article: [Flights Abroad Sell Out, Stocks Plunge on Putin's 'Partial' Mobilization](#)

In the first official estimate of Russia’s battlefield losses since late March, Shoigu announced that 5,937 Russian soldiers had been killed in Ukraine since the start of the fighting. Evidence from the battlefield and publicly available information in Russia suggests the real figure is significantly higher.

Shoigu claimed Wednesday more than 61,000 Ukrainian soldiers had been killed and 49,000 wounded since February.

The Moscow Exchange dropped sharply on the news of partial mobilization Wednesday morning, falling 9.45% to a level not seen since the beginning of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Following the announcement, the Vesna (Spring) opposition movement [called on](#) Russians across the country to protest Wednesday evening.

“Thousands of Russian men — our fathers, brothers and husbands — will be thrown into the meat grinder of war. What will they die for? Why will mothers and children shed tears? For Putin's palace? Now the war will truly come to every home and every family,” Vesna said.

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