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Putin tells FSB to strengthen controls over refugees heading to Russia and Europe

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"Control over the flows of refugees heading both to Russia and also on transit to European countries should be strengthened," Putin said at a meeting with the FSB collegium on Friday, where objectives for the state security service for the near future have been defined.

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Putin also pointed out that "*the so-called refugee crisis emerged long before Russia started its anti-terror operations in Syria.*" Saying that there are refugees from Afghanistan on the Macedonian border, the president said: "*What do Russia's actions in Syria have to do with it?*" He added: "*Nothing.*"

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*"The cause of this refugee crisis is the destabilization of entire regions of the world, first of all in the Middle East,"* the Russian president said, adding that all Moscow's efforts in the region are aimed at stabilizing the situation in the countries suffering from terrorism, and to provide conditions for these countries' nationals to return to their homes.

The president also stressed the necessity to *"safely close the territory of Russia"* from penetration of militants from the Middle East and other regions, and to *"uncover and neutralize"* those who are involved in terrorism activities globally.

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*"In this context, I would like to say that Russia and its Armed Forces have timely started operations in Syria... Thanks also to [the FSB's] efforts, the activities of clandestine groups that were ready to strike a blow at our country have been suppressed,"* Putin said.

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