
Putin given go-ahead to build new SUPER ARMY to destroy ISIS

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The National Guard force - which was approved by the Russian parliament today - will be put under the strongman's personal command.

It will be used for major counter-terrorism operations across the planet and have vast powers, including the authority to shoot into crowds and hold suspects for indefinite interrogation.

Experts say the ruthless force will act as an "extension" of Putin himself.

It will be used to conduct military operations around the world, detaining terror suspects for as long as is necessary to glean intelligence from them before handing them over to the police.

The former KGB leader was today given the green light by Russia's parliament for the elite unit, which will be [headed by his one-time bodyguard Viktor Zolotov](#).

Russia's State Duma passed the first reading of the controversial bill with 345 parliamentarians approving the motion and just 14 voting against.



GETTY / Mr Putin will be in personal charge of the new 'super army'

- Mr Zolotov will report directly into the Russian president, giving Putin an iron grip over the country's counter terrorism effort and increasing the chances of a tough crackdown on home-grown jihadi extremists.

Among the new powers being handed to the guard is a licence to shoot into crowds of people during terrorist attacks or hostage situations - a method of policing that has until now been banned because of the risk of injuring or killing bystanders.



NC / The crack force will have the power to operate in Russia or overseas

- National Guard officers will also be deployed on combat missions abroad, including anti-ISIS operations in the Middle East as well as peacekeeping missions.

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But critics claimed Mr Putin could use the force to crush internal dissent in Russia.

Tatiana Stanovaya, of the Center of Political Technologies in Moscow, said the new guard force was so tightly tied to the Russian president that it would inevitably become "a continuation of Putin himself".

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GETTY / The former KGB leader was given the green light by Russia's parliament

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Russian sociologist Ella Paneyakh added: "The National Guard is not just another law enforcement agency.

"This is another army, with the right to conduct military operations on the territory of the country and against the country's citizens.

"It looks like they can seize anyone and keep them as long as they want, wherever they want, until they are handed over to the police or a court."



GETTY / National Guard chief Viktor Zolotov, Mr Putin's former henchman

The development comes as [Russia prepares to beef up its air defences against missile attacks](#) from the Middle East.

On Tuesday it announced plans to restore the Cold War-era Dnepr base near Sevastopol, which will be equipped to intercept ballistic, cruise and hypersonic missiles at a range of around 2,000 miles.

The vast complex has not been used for 10 years but fell back under the Kremlin's control when Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014.

The military superpower is also in the advanced stages of testing an [intercontinental ballistic missile so powerful it has been dubbed Satan by Nato](#) defence chiefs.

Russian media said the rocket could "erase from the face of the earth land plots the size of Texas or France".

The missile has been designed with stealth technology which enables it to be fired at a target without being picked up by radar systems.

It follows a warning by a former Nato commander that war between Britain and Russia was increasingly likely.

Sir Alexander Richard Shirreff said Putin should be judged "by his deeds not his words"

He added: "He has used force and got away with it. In a period of tension, an attack on the Baltic states is entirely plausible."
