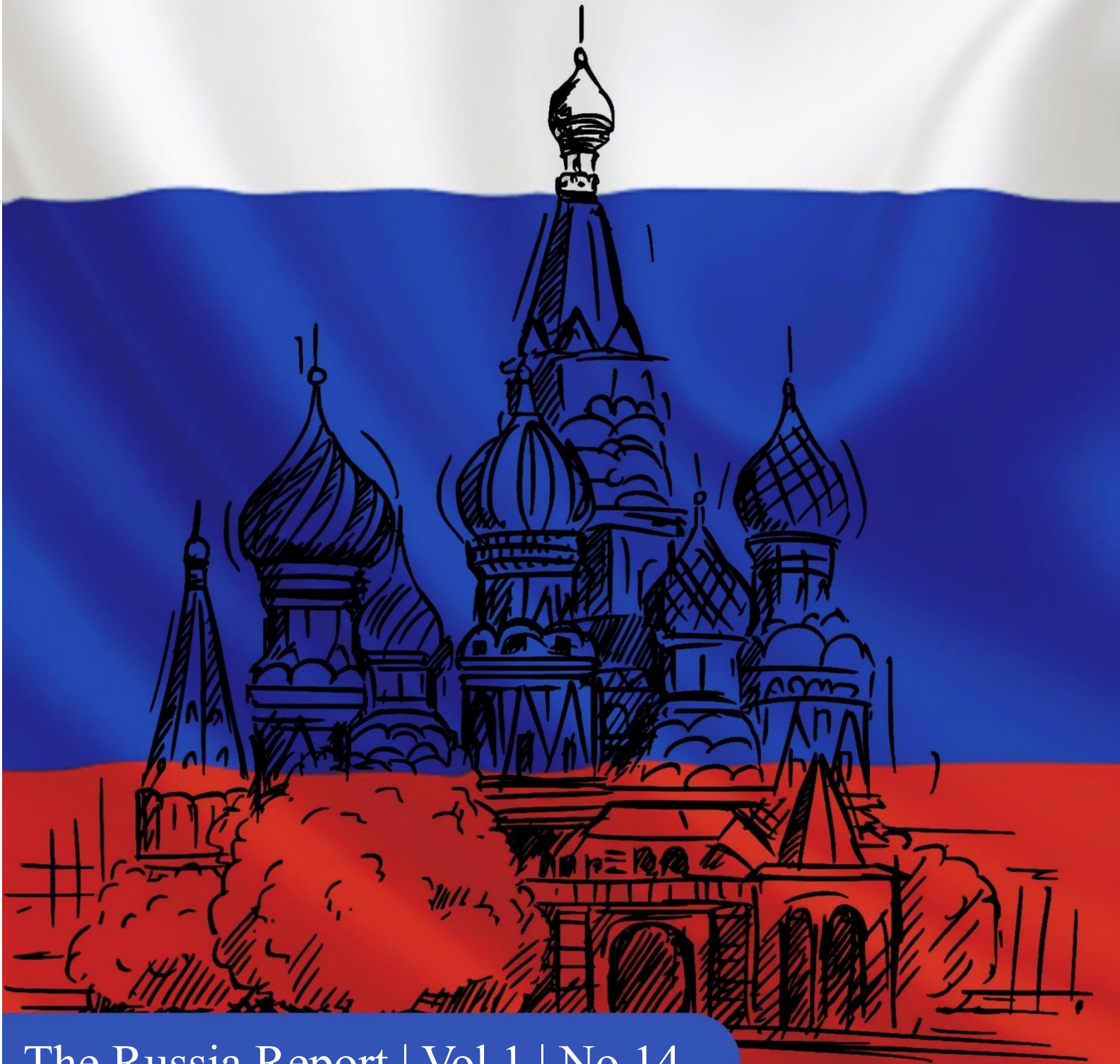


CLAWS Newsletter



The Russia Report | Vol 1 | No 14

by Anusua Ganguly

- **Putin at Valdai Discussion Club**

Vladimir Putin at Valdai Discussion Club: Quotes on NATO, Ukraine, Trump, and Europe

[The Hindu](#), [President of Russia](#), [The Moscow Times](#), October 2, 2025

Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed foreign policy experts at the Valdai Discussion Club in Sochi, outlining Russia's stance on Europe, NATO, Ukraine, and U.S. relations. He described NATO as a "paper tiger," asserting that Russian forces advance confidently despite EU militarisation. Putin criticised European leaders for "hysteria" and escalating the conflict in Ukraine, placing responsibility for continued fighting on a minority of European states.

Regarding Ukraine, he claimed Russia controls nearly all of Luhansk and maintains strategic initiative across the line of contact. He accused NATO countries of direct involvement, providing training, intelligence, and weapons to Ukrainian forces.

Putin praised U.S. President Donald Trump as an example of prioritising domestic interests over globalist agendas, emphasising Russia's desire to restore full-fledged relations with the U.S. He noted discussions with Trump at the Alaska summit focused on possibilities to resolve the Ukraine crisis.

On energy and international affairs, Putin defended Russia's uranium exports to the U.S. and warned India against rejecting Russian energy, expressing confidence in Prime Minister Modi's decisions. He condemned France's seizure of a Russian oil tanker in international waters as "piracy."

Putin also addressed the Gaza conflict, supporting a two-state solution, and criticised alleged Ukrainian strikes on Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, warning of potential retaliatory risks. His remarks reflect Moscow's focus on asserting military strength, maintaining strategic initiative, and expanding geopolitical influence amid ongoing conflicts and tensions with the West.

Putin Blames Europe and Signals Shifts in Russian Foreign Policy

[European Council of foreign Relations](#), 2 October, 2025

In his 2025 Valdai Club speech, Russian President Vladimir Putin explicitly blamed Europe for ongoing hostilities in Ukraine, accusing the EU of escalation and framing it as a primary obstacle to peace. He outlined three key directions for Russian policy towards Europe.

First, Putin condemned European militarization and anti-Russian policies, pledging to increase military pressure and expand Russia's arsenal. Second, he highlighted support for far-right and anti-establishment politicians across Europe, including France, Germany, and Hungary, framing them as instruments to weaken EU unity and ease sanctions. He emphasized the use of "influence on the political consciousness" of adversaries, signalling continued investment in information warfare and influence operations.

Third, Putin praised U.S. President Donald Trump as a model for prioritizing domestic agendas over globalist policies, implying that Moscow seeks to engage Washington in ways that could marginalize Europe.

The speech coincides with increased Russian drone and aircraft violations of EU airspace, underscoring the Kremlin's readiness to apply military and political pressure. Analysts suggest that Moscow will continue targeting perceived EU vulnerabilities, including migration, social spending, and identity politics, while investing heavily in propaganda, political influence, and anti-establishment networks.

Putin's remarks indicate a two-pronged strategy: applying military and informational pressure on Europe, while cultivating ties with U.S. actors sympathetic to his agenda. The EU is urged to bolster border defences, reinforce communication infrastructures, and monitor both domestic and transatlantic political developments to mitigate Moscow's efforts to undermine unity and weaken support for Ukraine.

Putin's Valdai Speech: A Message to Europe and Russian audience

[Firstpost](#), October 2, 2025

Russian President Vladimir Putin's address at the Valdai Discussion Club signalled a strategic, wartime message to both domestic and European audiences. Framing Russia's conflict in Ukraine as a defensive struggle against Western hegemony, Putin emphasised that Moscow is part of an emerging multipolar world, prepared for a long war of attrition.

He accused Europe of internal weakness and escalating the conflict, portraying European leaders' fears of a Russian attack as "nonsense" while warning that Russian retaliation against militarisation could be swift and calibrated. Cyber operations, energy pressure, and supply chain strikes were highlighted as tools of asymmetric response. Putin presented Europe as "eaten from the inside" by migration and instability, reinforcing a narrative of vulnerability.

On Ukraine, he claimed territorial gains in Luhansk and Kupiansk, presenting losses as manageable and stressing Russia's endurance and production capacity. He contrasted Ukraine's early innovation-driven resistance with the industrialized phase of the conflict, suggesting that time and attrition favour Moscow.

The speech also reassured domestic audiences of Russia's resilience against sanctions and Western pressure while signalling Europe and the West that Moscow sees its strategic advantage. By portraying itself as a counterweight rather than an aggressor, Russia positions its actions as justified, aiming to undermine European unity and test the West's endurance.

Valdai was thus a strategic broadcast: a warning to Europe, a reassurance to Russians, and a statement of Moscow's intent to maintain pressure in Ukraine and on the international stage.

- **Russia-Pakistan**

Moscow Dismisses Reports of Supplying JF-17 Engines to Pakistan as 'Mischievous'

[The Economic Times](#), [Firstpost](#), 6 October 2025

Russia has strongly denied media reports suggesting it plans to supply engines for the JF-17 fighter jets jointly developed by China and Pakistan, calling them “*mischievous and baseless.*” The clarification comes ahead of President Vladimir Putin’s scheduled visit to India in December 2025, where key defence and trade agreements are expected to be finalized.

According to sources cited by *The Economic Times*, Moscow reaffirmed its commitment to New Delhi under a longstanding understanding that Russia will not provide any military equipment to Pakistan that could compromise India’s strategic interests. Officials suggested that the false reports were deliberately circulated to “spoil atmospherics” before the annual India–Russia summit.

The only recorded Russian defence supply to Pakistan in recent years was a limited batch of helicopters for counterterrorism operations in 2015–16. In contrast, Russia continues to maintain deep strategic defence cooperation with India, exemplified by joint projects like the BrahMos missile system and the S-400 air defence systems.

Preparatory meetings between Indian and Russian defence officials in New Delhi have reportedly focused on new agreements to include additional S-400 systems, joint development of S-500 systems, and potential collaboration on the Su-57 fighter jet, with an offer of technology transfer.

Beyond defence, agriculture and energy cooperation are expected to feature prominently during Putin’s visit, with discussions on expanding fertilizer supplies and joint agricultural production.

The visit — Putin’s first to India since 2021 — underscores the resilience of the India–Russia strategic partnership, which remains a stabilizing pillar in Eurasia and a key component of New Delhi’s pursuit of strategic autonomy amid shifting global power dynamics.

Russia and Pakistan Conclude ‘Druzhba 2025’ Joint Military Exercises

[Business Recorder](#), 12 October 2025; [OANA News](#), 10 October 2025

Russia and Pakistan have successfully concluded the Druzhba 2025 joint military exercises in Russia’s Southern Military District, the Russian Defence Ministry announced. The drills, which brought together around 200 servicemen from both nations, focused on enhancing cooperation in counterterrorism operations.

From the Russian side, elite Special Operations Forces with extensive experience in anti-terror missions took part, while Pakistan was represented by its Army Special Forces. The exercises included a series of tactical and operational training activities designed to improve coordination in responding to evolving terrorist threats.

The event concluded with a closing ceremony honouring the most distinguished participants. Following tradition, servicemen from both countries exchanged souvenirs bearing the *Druzhba 2025* emblem, symbolizing friendship and mutual respect.

First launched in 2016, the *Druzhba* (“Friendship”) series has become a key platform for Russia–Pakistan defence cooperation, held alternately in both countries. The exercises underscore a shared commitment to regional stability, capacity-building, and the joint fight against terrorism.

- **Afghan Foreign Minister Muttaqi in Moscow**

Russia Holds First Official Talks with Taliban After Recognition of Islamic Emirate

[The Moscow Times](#), [TOLO News](#), 7 October, 2025

Russia held its first official talks with Afghanistan’s Taliban government following Moscow’s formal recognition of the Islamic Emirate in July 2025. The meeting took place during the 7th Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan, attended by senior officials from Russia, Afghanistan, India, Iran, Pakistan, and Central Asian states.

The Taliban delegation, led by Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, participated in the talks for the first time as an official member. The discussions focused on regional stability, counterterrorism, and economic cooperation.

Russia’s recognition of the Taliban government earlier this year marked a significant policy shift, following its decision to remove the movement from its list of terrorist organisations and accept a Taliban-appointed ambassador in Moscow.

Russia Reaffirms Commitment to Afghanistan’s Stability at 7th Moscow Format Meeting

[The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation](#), [The Print](#), 7 October, 2025

At the 7th Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov reaffirmed Russia’s commitment to supporting Afghanistan as a sovereign, unified, and peaceful state integrated within its regional environment. Lavrov highlighted the growing importance of the forum, noting the participation of the official Afghan delegation led by Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi as a key step toward inclusive dialogue.

He emphasised that Afghanistan’s stability and regional security depend on its active participation in political processes, economic cooperation, and counterterrorism initiatives. Following Russia’s official recognition of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in July 2025, Lavrov underscored Moscow’s readiness to expand collaboration in combating terrorism, drug trafficking, and fostering trade links.

Lavrov criticised Western nations for continuing to block Afghanistan’s financial assets and maintain sanctions that hinder economic recovery. He called on them to return seized funds and contribute to the country’s reconstruction, arguing that foreign interference and military presence in the region risk renewed instability.

Acknowledging Kabul's success in consolidating power, Lavrov commended its progress against terrorist groups and the sharp decline—by 90 percent since 2022—in poppy cultivation and opium production, as reported by the UN.

He also expressed concern over Afghanistan's worsening humanitarian conditions, urging international donors to provide assistance without political conditions. Concluding his remarks, Lavrov called for constructive dialogue and tangible outcomes to advance regional stability and the welfare of the Afghan people.

Joint Statement of the Moscow Format on Afghanistan Reaffirms Regional Commitment to Peace and Stability

[The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation](#), October 7, 2025

A joint statement was issued following the 7th meeting of the Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan, held in Moscow with the participation of senior representatives from Afghanistan, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. A delegation from Belarus attended as a guest. For the first time, the Afghan delegation, led by Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, participated as a full member.

In the joint statement, participants reaffirmed their collective support for the establishment of Afghanistan as an independent, unified, and peaceful state. They stressed the importance of strengthening trade, investment, and economic cooperation to promote Afghanistan's sustainable development and integration into regional connectivity frameworks. The statement also highlighted cooperation in healthcare, agriculture, poverty reduction, and disaster management as key areas for future collaboration.

The joint declaration reiterated a shared commitment to continue humanitarian assistance for the Afghan people, calling on the international community to scale up emergency aid while rejecting any attempts to politicize it.

On security, the participants agreed to enhance bilateral and multilateral counterterrorism efforts, urging Afghanistan to take comprehensive measures to eliminate terrorist threats and ensure that its territory is not used to endanger regional or global security.

The joint statement further urged countries responsible for Afghanistan's current crisis to fulfil their commitments to its recovery and strongly opposed the deployment of foreign military infrastructure in Afghanistan or neighbouring states, citing risks to regional stability.

Regional Powers Oppose U.S. Plans to Reclaim Afghanistan's Bagram Base

[Al Jazeera](#), [Reuters](#), 8 October, 2025

Regional countries participating in the 7th Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan issued a joint statement opposing any foreign military infrastructure in Afghanistan or neighbouring states, in response to reports that U.S. President Donald Trump is seeking to regain control of the former Bagram airbase.

The Moscow Format — comprising Afghanistan, India, Iran, China, Pakistan, Russia, and five Central Asian republics — reaffirmed its unified stance supporting Afghanistan as an

“independent, united and peaceful state.” Participants stressed that deploying foreign military facilities in the region would threaten peace and stability, echoing previous statements but signalling broad opposition to Washington’s renewed interest in Bagram.

India’s endorsement of the statement drew attention, marking a delicate balancing act between its partnership with the United States and its growing engagement with the Taliban. Following the forum, Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi reiterated Kabul’s rejection of any foreign presence, asserting that Afghanistan “has never accepted” external military bases and remains committed to full sovereignty.

The joint declaration follows Trump’s recent remarks citing Bagram’s proximity to China as a strategic motivation for reestablishing a U.S. foothold in the area. However, security experts have questioned the feasibility of such a move, noting that reoccupation would require extensive logistics and potentially tens of thousands of troops.

Bagram, once the largest U.S. military base in Afghanistan, was seized by the Taliban in 2021 after the U.S. withdrawal that ended two decades of war.

- **Putin in Tajikistan**

Putin Arrives in Tajikistan to Strengthen Ties with Central Asia

[President of Russia](#), [Reuters](#), [bne IntelliNews](#), 8 October, 2025

Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Tajikistan on October 8 to attend a series of meetings with leaders of ex-Soviet Central Asian states, aiming to reinforce regional cooperation and Moscow’s influence. The Russia-Central Asia summit, beginning October 9, includes the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and will be followed by a broader Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) meeting with Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Belarus.

Putin’s visit comes amid heightened international scrutiny, including an International Criminal Court arrest order related to the deportation of Ukrainian children, which has limited his foreign travel. Nevertheless, Moscow is seeking to deepen ties with its Asian neighbours, maintain regional stability, and counterbalance shifting influence in Central Asia.

Key topics expected at the summit include regional development, border security, and the welfare of millions of migrant workers from Central Asia employed in Russia, whose remittances are vital to their home economies. Russian Defence Minister Andrei Belousov met with his Tajik counterpart Emomali Sobirzoda to discuss military cooperation, emphasizing the importance of institutional collaboration for regional stability.

Putin is also scheduled to meet Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, reflecting Moscow’s efforts to manage strained regional relations. Analysts note that Russia’s influence in Central Asia has declined in recent years, with some states adopting more balanced positions on Moscow’s policies, including the war in Ukraine, making the summit a critical opportunity for reinforcing Russian ties and regional security.

Russia–Central Asia Summit in Dushanbe: Testing Moscow’s Grip

[The Times of Central Asia](#), [The Moscow Times](#), 9 October 2025

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s three-day visit to Tajikistan from October 8–10, 2025, for the Russia–Central Asia Summit and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) meeting, marks an important attempt to reassert Moscow’s influence in a region where its dominance is increasingly contested. The visit underscores Russia’s dual goals—reaffirming security ties and stabilising its regional standing amid sanctions, migration tensions, and China’s growing presence.

In Dushanbe, Putin and Tajik President Emomali Rahmon reaffirmed their “strategic partnership and alliance,” highlighting a 17% increase in trade this year. Putin pledged continued security cooperation, stressing Tajikistan’s role as a “reliable ally” amid Afghanistan-related risks. The Russia–Central Asia Summit, attended by leaders from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, focused on expanding cooperation in trade, transport, energy, migration, and environmental policy. A joint communiqué outlining regional priorities for 2025–2027 is expected.

The following CIS summit is set to broaden the agenda, including defence cooperation through 2030, counterterrorism, and border security. Russia’s Defence Minister Andrei Belousov also held talks in Dushanbe, reaffirming the importance of Tajikistan’s role in regional stability as host to Russia’s largest foreign military base.

However, Moscow’s position faces strain. Central Asian states increasingly balance ties with China, the EU, and the U.S., avoiding explicit endorsement of Russia’s war in Ukraine. Migration remains a tense issue—Tajik workers in Russia face rising hostility following the 2024 Crocus City Hall attack, testing bilateral trust.

For Putin, the Dushanbe visit is both symbolic and strategic—a bid to project continued leadership in a region once considered firmly under Russian influence. Yet, without tangible economic gains or credible security assurances, the summit risks underscoring Moscow’s diminishing leverage in a rapidly shifting Central Asian geopolitical landscape.

Putin Admits Russian Air Defences Caused Azerbaijani Jet Crash, Killing 38

[President of Russia](#), [AP](#), [The Independent](#), 9 October 2025

Russian President Vladimir Putin publicly acknowledged for the first time that Russian air defences were responsible for the downing of an Azerbaijan Airlines jet in December 2024, which killed 38 people. Speaking in Dushanbe on October 9, alongside Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev during the Russia–Central Asia Summit, Putin described the tragedy as the result of an “unintended chain of technical failures” while Russian forces were responding to a Ukrainian drone incursion.

The Embraer 190 jet, enroute from Baku to Grozny, was struck by fragments from a Russian missile near Kazakhstan’s Aktau airport, where it crash-landed after being hit. Putin admitted that Russian missiles detonated close to the aircraft rather than on target, attributing the

incident to a self-destruct sequence misfire. He pledged accountability and compensation for the victims' families, emphasizing that "those responsible will face consequences."

Azerbaijan had long accused Moscow of attempting to conceal its role in the disaster. President Aliyev, in earlier remarks, called Russia's explanations "absurd" and demanded transparency. Putin's acknowledgment marks a significant diplomatic shift, aimed at repairing relations between Moscow and Baku, which have been strained since the crash.

The admission comes as Russia seeks to maintain influence in the post-Soviet space, with tensions in Central Asia and the Caucasus intensifying amid the war in Ukraine. For Moscow, the gesture signals pragmatism—acknowledging fault to stabilize a crucial partnership with energy-rich Azerbaijan and preserve unity within the broader Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

- **Russia-Ukraine War**

Russia Upgrades Missiles to Evade Ukraine's Patriot Defence Systems

[Financial Times](#), [The Moscow Times](#), [The Kyiv Independent](#), [AeroTime](#), 2 October 2025

Russia has reportedly modified its Iskander-M and Kinzhal missiles to evade Ukraine's U.S.-supplied Patriot air defence systems, the *Financial Times* reported on Oct. 2, citing Ukrainian and Western officials. The upgrades, evident in recent strikes on Ukrainian drone production facilities, allow missiles to follow standard flight paths before abruptly changing course and diving steeply — a manoeuvre intended to defeat Patriot interceptors.

At least four Ukrainian drone plants were hit over the summer, with two other missiles allegedly targeting offices tied to a drone component manufacturer. Nearby buildings, including those housing the EU delegation and British Council, also sustained damage, though Kyiv has not publicly confirmed details of these attacks.

Ukraine's interception success rate reportedly fell from 37% in July to just 6% in September, even as Russian missile launches declined. On Oct. 1, Ukraine's Air Force said four Iskander-M missiles fired overnight all reached their targets, underscoring the growing challenge.

The Patriot system, one of Kyiv's few defences against ballistic missiles, remains central to its air shield but faces strain as Russia intensifies missile and drone strikes. Recent barrages — including one on Aug. 28 that killed 25 people in Kyiv and another on Sept. 28 that left four dead and over 70 injured — highlight Moscow's evolving tactics and the escalating air war.

The missile adaptations suggest a sophisticated Russian effort to neutralize Ukraine's most advanced Western defenses and maintain pressure on **key industrial and civilian targets**.

Ukraine Claims Capture of Indian National Fighting for Russia

[The Kyiv Independent](#), 7 October 2025; [NDTV](#), [Firstpost](#), 8 October, 2025

Ukrainian forces have reportedly captured a 22-year-old Indian national, Majoti Sahil Mohamed Hussein, allegedly fighting for the Russian army in Ukraine. Hussein, reportedly from Morbi, Gujarat, appeared in a video released by Ukraine's 63rd Mechanised Brigade, claiming he had been sentenced to seven years in prison in Russia on drug-related charges. According to Hussein, he signed a contract with the Russian military to avoid further punishment and was sent to the front after just 16 days of training.

Hussein said he participated in three days of combat but surrendered to Ukrainian forces after a conflict with his commander. He stated that he had been promised financial compensation for joining the Russian army, which he never received, and expressed a preference to remain in Ukraine rather than return to Russia.

The Indian Ministry of External Affairs has not yet verified the report and stated it is working to ascertain its accuracy. Earlier in 2025, India reported that several nationals misled into fighting for Russia had either died or gone missing, prompting diplomatic interventions with Moscow for the safe return of citizens.

India maintains a neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, refraining from taking sides or joining international sanctions against Moscow, while consistently advocating for a peaceful resolution. This incident underscores ongoing concerns over the recruitment of foreign nationals by Russia amid its military operations in Ukraine.

Who is Sahil Majothi? Indian Student detained by Ukraine

[BBC](#), [Daily Mail](#), 12 October 2025

Ukraine has detained an Indian national, Sahil Majothi, 22, from Gujarat, marking the first known instance of an Indian being captured while allegedly fighting for Russian forces. Majothi had travelled to Russia in January 2024 to study computer engineering but, according to his mother, became entangled in a drug case that drastically altered his fate.

His mother, Hasina Majothi, told BBC Gujarati that Sahil was falsely accused after unknowingly delivering a parcel containing drugs during his courier work in Moscow. Following his arrest, he was sentenced to seven years in prison. She claims that while in detention, Sahil was coerced into joining the Russian army as an alternative to serving his sentence.

A video released by Ukraine's 63rd Mechanized Brigade shows Majothi stating that Russian authorities gave him a choice — enlist and serve for a year in exchange for freedom and payment, or remain imprisoned. He said he underwent just 15 days of training before being deployed to the frontlines in late September 2025. Soon after, he separated from his unit and surrendered to Ukrainian troops.

India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has said it is investigating the matter and has not received formal communication from Ukraine. Gujarat's Anti-Terrorism Squad has also questioned Majothi's family following the video's circulation.

The case comes amid mounting reports of Indians being recruited by Russia under misleading promises of high pay or legal relief. Indian authorities have repeatedly urged citizens to avoid

such enlistments, warning that participation in the war poses grave risks to life and diplomatic complications.

U.S.-Backed Ukrainian Strikes Disrupt Russian Oil Sector; Putin Eases Fuel Subsidy Rules

[The Kyiv Independent](#), [The Moscow Times](#), [CNN](#), 12 October 2025

Ukraine has intensified its drone attacks on Russian oil and gas infrastructure, with U.S. intelligence support guiding strikes on refineries, pipelines, and key energy facilities. According to the Financial Times, Washington has provided detailed data on flight routes, altitudes, timing, and vulnerabilities to help Kyiv maximize operational impact while evading Russian air defenses. These coordinated strikes aim to weaken Russia's economy and pressure President Vladimir Putin into peace negotiations.

Since August, Ukrainian drones have targeted major refineries including Novokuybyshev, Rosneft's Ryazan, Antipinsky in Tyumen, Slavneft-YANOS, Orsknefteorgsintez, and Kinef. Damage to these facilities has reduced Russia's refining output to 4.86 million barrels per day, nearly 10% below July levels and the lowest in at least five years. Fuel shortages have appeared in 57 regions, with retail gasoline prices rising sharply—up 12.73% annually, the fastest pace in 14 years. Russia has had to curb exports, boost imports from Belarus, and source supplies from China and other Asian markets.

In response, President Putin has signed a decree loosening fuel subsidy rules, ensuring refineries continue receiving state payments even as wholesale prices surge. The decree, effective Oct. 1, 2025, to May 1, 2026, allows refineries to maintain production despite price thresholds, safeguarding domestic fuel supply and stabilizing the market amid ongoing attacks. Recent Ukrainian drone strikes on Bashnafta-UNPZ in Bashkortostan triggered explosions and fires, highlighting vulnerabilities deep within Russia, over 1,400 km from the front line.

The intensified attacks and domestic policy adjustments underscore the growing strain on Russia's energy sector, a critical source of revenue sustaining its military operations. Analysts note that prolonged disruptions, combined with fuel subsidy pressures, could reshape Moscow's economic resilience and wartime planning, while signaling the increasing sophistication of Ukraine's long-range strike capabilities with U.S. support.

Trump Considers Sending Tomahawk Missiles to Ukraine, Raising Tensions with Moscow

[BBC](#), [AP](#), [Sky News](#), 13 October 2025

US President Donald Trump has indicated he may provide long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles to Ukraine, marking a potential escalation in the ongoing conflict with Russia. Speaking to reporters on Air Force One, Trump said, "We'll see... I may," regarding the delivery of the missiles, which could strike targets up to 2,500 km (1,500 miles) inside Russian territory.

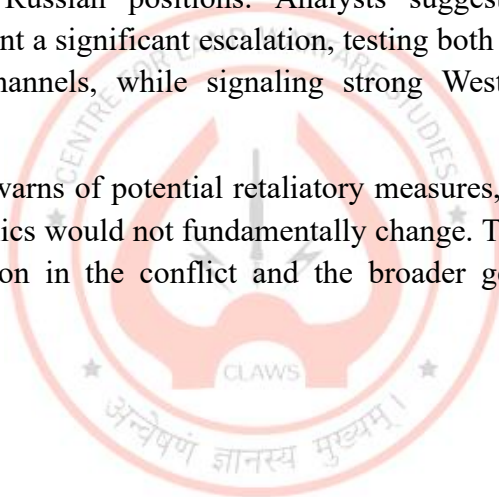
The comments came ahead of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's planned visit to Washington on Friday, his third since January, where the leaders are expected to discuss air defence and long-range strike capabilities. Trump framed the move as a measure to pressure Russia, warning that Moscow would likely oppose Tomahawk deployments.

Russia has responded cautiously but firmly. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov described the potential supply of Tomahawks as a matter of "extreme concern," emphasizing the risks of miscalculation and escalation. Former President Dmitry Medvedev warned that the delivery could have severe consequences, suggesting it would endanger both sides, and directly criticized Trump's hawkish stance.

Tomahawk missiles, capable of carrying conventional or nuclear warheads, could put Russian cities within reach, intensifying Moscow's strategic anxieties. This comes amid continued Russian missile and drone attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure, raising winter security concerns in Kyiv.

Since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, Kyiv has repeatedly requested long-range strike systems to target deep Russian positions. Analysts suggest that the deployment of Tomahawks would represent a significant escalation, testing both Russian deterrence and US-Russia communication channels, while signaling strong Western support for Ukraine's military objectives.

Moscow's official stance warns of potential retaliatory measures, although Peskov maintains that the overall war dynamics would not fundamentally change. The situation underscores the ongoing high-stakes tension in the conflict and the broader geopolitical contest between Moscow and Washington.



About the Author

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