

Putin Attends Military Exercise in Black Sea

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President Vladimir Putin has attended a military exercise in the Black Sea intended to showcase Russia's resurgent military might.

Putin ordered the conduct of the maneuvers from aboard the presidential plane on a flight home from South Africa. The exercise involved about 7,000 troops, 30 naval ships, dozens of combat aircraft and hundreds of armored vehicles.

Putin, accompanied by his defense minister, flew in a military helicopter to watch the maneuvers Friday. The Kremlin said the exercise's goal is to check the military's quick response capability.

The chief of the military's general staff, General Valery Gerasimov, told Putin that a convoy of 80 armored vehicles had quickly made a 450-kilometer journey from their base to the exercise area. The drill also involved scrambling several airborne units.

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