

# Russian Defense Ministry to Establish Military Zone in the Arctic

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Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu heeded Putin's call and immediately ordered the General Staff to prepare a plan for regulating military deployment in the Arctic.

The Defense Ministry has announced plans to set up six military camps in the Arctic, a news report said Saturday.

"To further develop the stationing of ground forces in the Arctic, six new military camps will be set up. They will be contemporary military communities. We will call them 'The North Star,' since the shape of the community resembles a star," Roman Filimonov, director of the ministry's department for state procurement of capital construction, said in comments carried by the Russian News Service.

Filimonov said the construction of the new military communities in the Arctic would allow troops stationed there to live and work comfortably, "practically not even coming into contact with the conditions of the Arctic."

Last December, President Vladimir Putin called on defense officials to ramp up military

capabilities in the Arctic region in light of the U.S. navy's presence there and the interest of China, Brazil and Britain in the area's energy reserves.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu heeded Putin's call and immediately ordered the General Staff to prepare a plan for regulating military deployment in the region and improving facilities there.

Russia's arctic zone accounts for about 21.6 percent of its territory and is home to 2.3 million of its people.

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