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Putin to New Duma: Power is Key to Russian Existence

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Kremlin Press Service

Russian President Vladimir Putin has announced that "being powerful" is the key to Russia's “statehood, independence and mere existence.”

Addressing Russia's new State Duma on its first official day of work, Putin said that the new parliament should continue to keep the country in a position of influence.

"Every nation and every country has the right to be powerful, as does [Russia]," he said. "Our power is in ourselves, in our nation and our people, in our ⊠traditions, our culture, our economy.”

Other goals for the new Duma included boosting investment in Russian ⊠economy and increasing the country’s defense potential, Putin said. ⊠He also called for lawmakers to help reinforce international ⊠connections.

The president maintained that the State Duma's recently-elected 7th convocation was

“undoubtedly ⊠legitimate,” having been elected in a “transparent”⊠ and “fair” race. He also called for more communication between ⊠lawmakers and society at large, as well as political parties which didn’t win a seat within the parliament.

The president also thanked the previous Duma — notorious for the oppressive laws it passed — and expressed his hope that the new parliament would continue its work.

Elections for Russia’s lower house of parliament, the State Duma, saw a long-expected landslide victory for the ruling United Russia party on Sept. 18. Independent election monitors have declared that the State Duma vote was “far from free and fair.”

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