

Putin Says Military Overhaul to Go Ahead Despite Budget Cuts

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Cuts to defense spending next year will not affect plans to re-equip the Russian Armed Forces, President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday, the state-run TASS news agency [reports](#).

At a meeting with the State Duma's United Russia leader, Vladimir Vasilyev, Putin said there would however be "some cuts compared to past [spending]."

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The Defense Ministry has embarked on an ambitious modernization overhaul, which would see 70 percent of the Armed Forces' Soviet-era hardware replaced by 2020.

But an economic crisis caused by low oil prices and Western sanctions meant Russia in 2016 was forced to [slash](#) defense spending from 3.9 trillion rubles (\$65.4 billion) in 2016, to 2.8 trillion rubles in 2017, and 2.7 trillion rubles next year.

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