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Putin Is Reportedly Deciding How to Announce His 2018 Presidential Bid

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Vladimir Putin / Kremlin Press Service

Vladimir Putin is reportedly deciding how and when to announce his bid for a fourth presidential term next year.

Putin, who has yet to make his presidential ambitions official, is widely expected to run in the 2018 election that would extend his presidency into 2024.

The Russian head of state has "decided that he'll take part" in the presidential campaign, a federal official told the RBC business portal on Monday.

A source close to the Kremlin told RBC that Putin is likely to launch his campaign ahead of the ruling United Russia Party's congress on Dec. 22-23. Another source told RBC the Kremlin is considering launching Putin's campaign in early January.

Another federal official is cited as saying there are several ways in which Putin's official nomination as the ruling party's candidate could unfold.

“We could announce the intention to run during a regional trip where a worker would ask the question, or [we could] organize a special large-scale event with famous people,” RBC cites the official as saying.

Some within the Russian elite would like Putin to announce soon, a source close the presidential administration told RBC. “The elites understand that Putin will seek reelection but many would still like clarity,” he was cited as saying.

Others, the source told RBC, say there’s no need to hurry because Putin’s victory, judging by his traditionally high poll numbers, is all but guaranteed.

Putin’s challengers include celebrity and journalist Ksenia Sobchak, her colleague and arch-rival Yekaterina Gordon and a slew of businesspeople and TV personalities.

Opposition leader Alexei Navalny has been running a nationwide campaign for several months despite a criminal conviction that bars him from running. His supporters say the conviction is politically motivated.

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