

Putin Seeks to Abandon Geneva Conventions' Victim-Protection Clause

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Igor Ivanko / Moskva News Agency

President Vladimir Putin is seeking to withdraw Russia's recognition of a Geneva Conventions provision on protecting victims of war.

[Spurred](#) by Russian lawmakers, Putin issued a decree Wednesday [revoking](#) the Soviet Union's statement accompanying its 1989 adoption of the additional protocol to the conventions. Adopted in 1977, Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions aims to protect victims of international conflicts.

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A draft bill Putin [submitted](#) to the lower house of parliament Thursday cites "exceptional circumstances affecting Russia's interests and requiring urgent action."

Putin argued that a fact-finding commission established under the protocol is technically

defunct and lacks Russian representation despite annual fees paid by Moscow.

“Additionally, in the current international environment, the risks of abusing the commission's powers for political purposes by unscrupulous states are increasing significantly,” he wrote.

Putin’s authorship of the draft bill will likely ensure its swift passage in parliament, which is controlled by a pro-Putin party.

The United States has signed but not ratified the protocol.

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