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What Changes Is Putin Planning for Russia's Constitution?

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The amendments proposed by Putin on Wednesday would bring sweeping changes to Russia's political system. **Yevgeny Biyatov / Sputnik / POOL / TASS**

Russian President Vladimir Putin announced several constitutional amendments in the closing minutes of his annual state of the nation address Wednesday.

While Putin said the package of amendments should be put to a nationwide vote, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that vote does not entail a referendum.

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The national vote on Putin's package of constitutional amendments is expected to be held before May 1, a source in Russia's upper house of parliament told the state-run TASS news agency.

Here's a look at the constitutional amendments Putin proposed:

1. Limit the presidency to two terms, regardless of whether they were served back-to-back.
2. Tighten restrictions on presidential candidates, including banning them from holding second citizenship or permanent residency abroad and requiring them to have lived in Russia for 25 years.
3. Prioritize the Russian Constitution over international treaties and other acts.
4. Make the State Council — Putin's advisory body that he established when he was first elected in 2000 — an official governing body.
5. Ban lawmakers, cabinet ministers, judges and other federal-level officials from holding second citizenship or permanent residency abroad.
6. Grant Russia's lower house of parliament the authority to appoint the prime minister, their deputies and cabinet ministers. Bar the president from rejecting these nominations.
7. Grant senators the authority to consult the president on appointing the heads of all security agencies.
8. Grant senators the power to dismiss "dishonorable" Constitutional and Supreme Court judges based on the president's proposal.
9. Grant Constitutional Court judges the authority to review draft laws at the president's request before the head of state signs them.
10. Set Russia's minimum wage at or above the poverty line and adjust pensions to inflation every year.

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