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Putin Vaunts Russian Coronavirus Vaccine at UN

By AFP

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Putin offered to supply other countries with "a Russian vaccine that has shown its reliability, safety and effectiveness." **Kremlin.ru**

President Vladimir Putin in a speech at the United Nations on Tuesday boasted of Russia's creation of the world's first coronavirus vaccine, though it has not completed large-scale clinical trials.

Putin in a video address to the General Assembly said that Russia was open to partnership with other countries over "the first vaccine in the world, Sputnik V."

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"I repeat again that we are absolutely open and disposed for partnership," Putin said.

The Sputnik V vaccine was developed by Moscow's Gamaleya research center, and Russia

announced in August that it was the world's first registered vaccine.

While the vaccine has shown promising results in early trials, Russia has not yet completed the final phase of clinical testing, in which large numbers of people receive either the vaccine or a placebo.

Nevertheless Russia has already vaccinated high-profile officials including the Defense Ministry Sergei Shoigu and Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin. Putin has said that one of his daughters was vaccinated, suffering only a mild reaction.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund that has supported the vaccine's development said last month that 20 countries had pre-ordered supplies.

Putin urged an online conference to be held in the near future with other countries "interested in cooperating on creating a vaccine against coronavirus."

"We are ready to share our experience," Putin said, offering to supply other countries with "a Russian vaccine that has shown its reliability, safety and effectiveness."

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He also vaunted Russia's speed in "developing a line of test systems and medications for diagnosing and treating coronavirus."

"Our country has played an active role in global and regional efforts to fight Covid-19 and gives help to the countries that have suffered the most," he said.

He cited cases of the coronavirus among UN staff and offered to give them the Sputnik V vaccine.

"Russia is ready to give the UN staff all the necessary professional help: in particular we propose offering our vaccine for voluntary vaccination of staff of the UN and its subsidiaries," Putin said.

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