

# Russia to Stage Large-Scale ‘Attack’ Drills Near Ukraine as Tensions Ratchet

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Russia [announced](#) large-scale “attack” and amphibious assault exercises in and around annexed Crimea on Thursday as Western governments continue to sound the alarm over Moscow’s possible invasion of Ukraine.

More than 1,200 Russian airborne and artillery troops, as well as chemical and biological forces and 250 pieces of military hardware, will conduct combat firing exercises at the Opuk training ground in Crimea, according to the state-run TASS news agency.

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“The servicemen will perform firing tasks and hit targets at various ranges,” the Defense Ministry was quoted as saying.

The soldiers will also practice clearing mines and covering from air and drone attacks, it

added.

Russia's military will also deploy Mi-35 helicopters for amphibious assault and to provide air cover for attacking troops.

On Friday, paratroopers will perform close combat drills and artillery reconnaissance and attack maneuvers at the Raevsky training ground near the southern Russian city of Novorossiysk.

The military classified the two-day exercises as part of an "operational assembly of the forces' command personnel."

Russia announced the drills one day after the United States and Germany accused it of continuing to build up troops on the border with Ukraine.

The West accuses Russia of massing tens of thousands of soldiers on the Ukrainian border to prepare for a possible invasion.

The U.S. and its allies have warned of unprecedented sanctions if Russia follows through with the alleged plans.

Moscow denies planning to invade Ukraine and instead demands security guarantees from Washington and the U.S.-led NATO military bloc, threatening a military response to what it perceives as threatening moves.

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