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Putin Hails ‘Military Glory, Traditional Values’ on Russia Flag Day

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The Russian flag inspires Russians to “military glory” and represents their adherence to “traditional values,” President Vladimir Putin said in an address marking National Flag Day on Monday.

Nearly six months after launching a full-scale invasion of neighboring Ukraine that has pushed Russia into historic political and economic isolation, Putin vowed that Moscow would continue charting its own course in the international arena.

“Russia is a strong, independent world power. On the international stage, we are committed to pursuing only those policies that meet the vital interests of our Fatherland,” he said in a video address.

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Without directly mentioning Russia's drawn-out campaign in pro-Western Ukraine, Putin said the national flag would inspire Russian citizens to "military glory."

Russia's white-blue-and-red flag "symbolizes our faith in our traditional values that we will never give up," Putin said.

These values, he added, "inspire us to care for and defend our Motherland and never permit any foreign hegemony or diktat."

Flag Day has been celebrated every year on Aug. 22 since then-President Boris Yeltsin introduced it in 1994.

The Russian tricolor itself was restored on Aug. 22, 1991, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and its national symbol, a golden hammer and sickle against a red background.

Some Russian anti-war activists have begun using a white-blue-white flag design following the Ukraine invasion, removing the red stripe in opposition to what they describe as its association with "blood and violence."

The white-blue-white flag also resembles that of the medieval Novgorod Republic, considered by many to be the cradle of Russian democracy.

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