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Leaders of Six Former Soviet Republics to Join Putin on Victory Day

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Russian President Vladimir Putin with the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in St. Petersburg in December. **Alexei Danichev / POOL / TASS**

Updates with Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko's arrival in Moscow on Monday evening.

The leaders of six former Soviet republics are now expected to attend Russia's annual Victory Day parade in Moscow on Tuesday, after Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko arrived unannounced in Moscow on Monday evening for what his press service said would be a "working visit."

The President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on Monday both confirmed their participation in the flagship event on Red Square, while Tajik President Emomali Rahmon and Uzbek leader Shavkat Mirziyoyev both commenced two-day visits to Russia on the same day.

Russian President Vladimir Putin will also be joined on Red Square by Kyrgyzstan's President

Sadyr Japarov — the only foreign leader to have given advance confirmation of his participation in the flagship parade.

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The six foreign leaders will join Russian President Vladimir Putin on the tribune above Lenin's Mausoleum on Red Square from where they will watch a procession of as many as 125 military vehicles and 10,000 personnel through Moscow's central square.

Russia's Victory Day celebrations on Tuesday will mark the 78th anniversary of the Soviet Union's defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

Though Victory Day celebrations have long been used by the Kremlin to showcase Russia's military might and to boost patriotic feelings among its citizens, this year's celebrations — which will take place against a background of increased aerial attacks on Russian territory — may see some of the most modest Victory celebrations to date.

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