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Russian Lawmakers Banned From Unauthorized Visits to Ukraine Frontline – RBC

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A Russian military vehicle. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russian lawmakers will be banned from visiting the war zone in Ukraine without direct approval from the country's military leadership, the RBC business outlet reported Thursday, citing three anonymous sources in Russia's parliament.

Since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year, politicians in Russia have frequently made trips to the frontline in order to boost their own political profiles at home and demonstrate loyalty to the Kremlin.

But as sources in Russia's lower-house State Duma told RBC, soldiers fighting at the front have grown irritated with the political "PR stunts."

Duma lawmakers "take pictures near tanks and cannons" and "constantly put on a show," said two anonymous sources.

Soldiers “are not satisfied with PR in the frontline zone,” RBC quoted one of its sources as saying.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu reportedly notified Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin that all visits to military units in the war zone would now require clearance from either himself or Valery Gerasimov, the chief of the General Staff.

Volodin and his deputies would also be responsible for personally filing requests to transport Duma lawmakers on military aircraft, RBC reported.

But Duma deputies will still be able to meet with Russian soldiers and supply aid on “neutral territory” in Ukrainian regions captured by Moscow, said one of the sources.

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