

# Russian Billionaires Supply Kremlin's Army, Military-Industrial Complex – Proekt

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Putin at a meeting of the Congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs in March 2023. [kremlin.ru](http://kremlin.ru)

At least 81 Russian billionaires have business links to Russia's military or to annexed Ukrainian territories amid the war in Ukraine, the independent investigative outlet Proekt [reported](#) Monday.

Most of these individuals have stayed silent on the war, with some reportedly criticizing it in private conversations. Despite their links to Russia's war machine, 34 of these oligarchs have only been sanctioned by Kyiv and not by any of its Western allies, Proekt said. And some have sought to appeal for the West to lift the war-related sanctions against them.

Billionaire and steel magnate Alexei Mordashov; Norilsk Nickel president Vladimir Potanin; Alisher Usmanov and Arkady Rotenberg are among the Russian businessmen whose enterprises have supplied the Russian army, Proekt said.

Proekt searched for public state contracts between companies wholly or partially owned by Forbes' most recent list of the 200 richest Russians and Russian military factories, the Defense Ministry or the National Guard (Rosgvardiya).

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The outlet lists detailed information about the 81 tycoons' companies and the business links between these enterprises and Russia's military, tracing a line from the billionaires to certain incidents or atrocities allegedly committed by the Russian army in Ukraine.

Proekt's journalists reported that the BMD-4 amphibious infantry fighting vehicles, which the Russian army used in Ukraine's Bucha for at least one documented shooting at a civilian car, were produced with the help of companies owned by Russian tycoons.

Rusal Ural, co-owned by oligarch Victor Vekselberg, supplies aluminum powder to the manufacturer of the Arkan missiles used by the BMD-4Ms, Proekt said.

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Prior to the launch of the war last year, Vekselberg [said](#) in an interview that "there are no people who want a war" in Russia.

Oleg Deripaska, who owns the enterprise Barnaultransmash, has also supplied aluminum powder for the manufacture of Arkan missiles, Proekt reported.

Following the invasion of Ukraine, Deripaska [said](#) that peace was needed "as soon as possible" and stressed that "destroying Ukraine would be a colossal mistake."

Proekt also detailed how Russian oligarchs including Alexei Mordashov, Mikhail Fridman, Yuri Kovalchuk, Petr Aven and others have been linked to the manufacture of the AK-100 series of Kalashnikov rifles used in Ukraine.

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