

Jailed Army General Popov Appeals to Putin for Return to Military Service

March 21, 2025



Major General Ivan Popov. **Alexei Potitsky / TASS**

A Russian general arrested on fraud allegations last year accused authorities of “unjust prosecution” and asked President Vladimir Putin to allow him to return to his post, the *Kommersant* business newspaper [reported](#) Thursday, citing a letter addressed to the Russian leader.

Major General Ivan Popov, who commanded Russia’s 58th Combined Arms Army in Ukraine, was [arrested](#) in May 2024 on accusations of misappropriating \$1.5 million worth of metal intended for reinforcing defense structures in occupied Ukraine.

A year earlier, Popov [said](#) he was relieved of his role as commander after complaining directly to former Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu about systemic mismanagement within the military.

His removal sparked outrage among influential pro-war bloggers, who cited his popularity with frontline troops.

“I was subjected to unjust prosecution,” Popov wrote in an undated letter addressed to Putin, according to *Kommersant*. “I wish to continue smashing the enemy [Ukraine] in accordance with the oath I took.”

The Kremlin later [confirmed](#) that Putin had received a letter from the general.

Related article: [Russia Grants House Arrest to General on Fraud Charge](#)

A military court initially granted Popov house arrest in July, but prosecutors successfully petitioned last month to return him to pre-trial detention over unspecified violations.

Under laws passed during Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine, *Kommersant* notes that Popov could avoid prosecution by signing a military contract and returning to combat duty.

If convicted of large-scale fraud, he faces up to 10 years in prison.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/03/21/jailed-army-general-popov-appeals-to-putin-for-return-to-military-service-a88435>