

United Russia Seeks to Curb Ukraine War Focus, Militant Rhetoric Ahead of WWII Victory Anniversary

March 24, 2025



Victory Day celebrations in Moscow in 2024. **Pelagia Tikhonova / Moskva News Agency**

The ruling United Russia party is working to rein in excessive focus on the war in Ukraine as it prepares for celebrations marking the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in World War II, the Kommersant business newspaper [reported](#) Saturday, citing remarks made by party officials at a recent gathering.

United Russia is distancing itself from the so-called “Z-agenda,” which senior party member Alexander Sidyakin described as the idea that the war in Ukraine “should end in Berlin, in Paris, with tanks, with cavalry.”

The letter “Z” has become a symbol of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Some pro-war figures have advocated for expanding the war beyond Ukraine, portraying it as a wider fight against the West.

Meanwhile, veterans of Russia's past military campaigns in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Syria have voiced frustration about recent commemorative events organized by United Russia, arguing that the party has focused too much on soldiers who fought in Ukraine.

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Senior party member Vladimir Yakushev urged the United Russia to ensure that veterans of previous wars are included in projects honoring military service so they are not overshadowed by Ukraine war veterans, Kommersant reported.

These discussions come ahead of the 80th anniversary of the Soviet victory in WWII, which Russia and several former Soviet republics celebrate as Victory Day on May 9.

As part of the commemoration, United Russia is pushing projects to memorialize World War II figures and events by installing plaques and renaming streets.

Despite the party's efforts to broaden its historical focus, Kommersant notes that President Vladimir Putin has issued directives to name streets, schools and universities after soldiers who fought in Ukraine.

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