The Moscow Times
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Russian Senator Proposes $25Bln Budget Cuts to Fund War Effort

July 23, 2025



A serviceman of Russia's Dnepr Group of Forces. **Alexei Konovalov / TASS**

A senator from Russia's upper-house Federation Council has called for significant federal spending cuts in order to boost funding for the war in Ukraine and national security.

In an article written for the RBC news website, Anatoly Artamonov, the chairman of the Federation Council's Budget and Financial Markets Committee, said up to 2 trillion rubles ($25.4 billion) could be reallocated annually to cover military and security expenses.

These areas already account for 40% of the national budget, the highest defense spending share since the Soviet era.

The proposed cuts, expected to continue through 2028, would target inefficient or non-essential expenditures, such as certain subsidies, benefits and funding for non-core assets like football clubs and unprofitable sanatoriums, he said.

"We have one task for the whole country. And to solve it, we will have to invest more money to

get it done faster," Artamonov said, referencing the war in Ukraine.

Artomonov insisted that social spending would not be affected.

Russia is set to spend 13.2 trillion rubles ($167.9 billion) on the war and 3.45 trillion rubles ($43.9 billion) on domestic security this year.

But with oil and gas revenues down 17% in the first half of the year, the country posted a 3.7 trillion ruble ($47.1 billion) deficit, six times higher than the same period last year.

As revenue pressures mount due to inflation and EU sanctions on Russian oil, the government plans to impose "the strictest austerity" in its upcoming three-year budget due this autumn.

Original url:
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