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Russia Slates Sarmat ICBM Deployment for Late 2026

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A test launch of the Sarmat ICBM on May 12, 2026. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Russia plans to deploy its new RS-28 Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile later this year, the commander of Russia's Strategic Missile Forces told President Vladimir Putin following a test launch on Tuesday morning.

Colonel General Sergei Karakayev reported that the Sarmat was launched at 11:15 a.m. Moscow time, according to a Kremlin readout of their conversation.

"The launch was successful, and the mission objectives were achieved," Karakayev told Putin, adding that the test clears the way for Russia's Strategic Missile Forces to station the first Sarmat-armed regiment at its Uzhur unit in the Krasnoyarsk region by the end of 2026.

"The Sarmat will indeed be placed on combat duty at the end of the current year," Putin confirmed.

While Putin first unveiled the Sarmat in 2018, its development has been marred by delays,

including a catastrophic silo explosion during a failed test in late 2024. Before Tuesday, the only other confirmed successful launch occurred in 2022.

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On Tuesday, Putin boasted that the Sarmat's total payload yield is "four times that of any existing equivalent." He further claimed that the missile's ballistic and suborbital trajectories allow for an operational range exceeding 35,000 kilometers (21,748 miles).

The Sarmat, dubbed "Satan 2" by Western analysts, is designed to carry multiple nuclear warheads and is a cornerstone of Russia's next-generation arsenal.

The deployment announcement comes a week after the CEO of the plant that produces the missile was reportedly arrested on corruption charges.

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