

Russian Combat Drone Forum Postponed Over Fears of Ukrainian Attack

August 12, 2026



@dronnitsa / Telegram

Organizers of a major forum for Russian military drone operators have postponed this year's event, citing intelligence that Ukraine was preparing an attack involving ballistic missiles and what they described as "terrorist bio-drones."

The annual Dronnitsa meeting, scheduled for Aug. 29–30 in the city of Veliky Novgorod northwest of Moscow, brings together combat drone operators, technical specialists and volunteers involved in Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The event was [scheduled](#) to be held some 120 kilometers (75 miles) away from President Vladimir Putin's Valdai residence, the exiled investigative outlet Agentsvo [reported](#). Previous reporting by exiled media has [said](#) Putin's alleged partner Alina Kabaeva and their two sons spend much of their time there and that the presidential residence is [surrounded](#) by air defenses.

Organizers said the decision was made following consultations with the Novgorod region's

leadership and Russian security services, who said protecting the forum would require diverting air defenses and security personnel from other locations.

“Exposing factories and bases in the Novgorod and neighboring regions for the sake of our own security would be wrong at this time, while holding the event under such risks would be overly presumptuous,” organizers [said](#) in a statement on Telegram.

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Alexei Chadayev, the event’s principal founder, [confirmed](#) the decision, saying that Ukrainian forces “would not have targeted Dronnitsa itself” if the gathering had gone ahead. He did not elaborate.

The Moscow Times could not independently verify the organizers’ claims about a planned Ukrainian operation. There was no immediate comment from Ukrainian authorities.

Dronnitsa has been held annually in the Novgorod region since 2022. Its principal organizer is the Coordination Center for Assistance to Novorossiia, a group that supports Russia’s war effort in Ukraine.

According to its website, the gathering [aims](#) to promote a culture of “military unmanned aviation” and build a professional community of drone instructors and operators, as well as electronic intelligence and electronic warfare specialists.

Past events have [focused](#) on the battlefield use of drones, lessons learned from combat and the creation of specialized drone and counter-drone units. Organizers have also discussed the mass deployment of unmanned aerial vehicles and ways to apply Russian and foreign experience to the military development of the sector.

The event describes itself as a meeting place for people working “for the victory of Russian arms in the special military operation,” the Kremlin’s term for its war on Ukraine.

Dronnitsa also helped give rise to Ushkuynik, a research and production center in Veliky Novgorod headed by Chadayev. The center tests, modifies and certifies drone technology including the Knyaz Vandal Novgorodsky (KVN), a fiber-optic-controlled first-person-view drone.

Chadayev has [described](#) the KVN as one of the most effective drones in its class when comparing its development and procurement costs with the damage it has inflicted on Ukraine. His claim could not be independently verified.

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