

# Meeting with Council of Lawmakers

On the Day of Russian Parliamentarism, the President met with members of the Council of Lawmakers at the Federation Council of the Russian Federation. The meeting was held in the Tauride Palace, per tradition.

April 27, 2022 16:45 St Petersburg

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Speech at the Council of Lawmakers meeting

**President of Russia Vladimir Putin:** Good afternoon, colleagues.

I would like to welcome all of you to our traditional meeting. I would like to congratulate you on the Day of Russian Parliamentarism, you and your colleagues, senators and deputies at all levels, legislative body staff and, of course, veteran MPs.

In May, the Council of Lawmakers will be 10 years old. We have all seen for ourselves that this format is useful and essential. As it coordinates the drafting of laws, following the principles of federalism, the Council facilitates the balanced development of our country. It reflects the diversity and wealth of our regions, our territories.

Your work is based on a constructive public dialogue. Such an open, specific exchange of opinions is certainly raising the Council's responsibility before the people and society for every promise, initiative and proposal. If we make a public statement, it should not just be left hanging with the public waiting while nothing happens. We should never allow this.

I would like to emphasise, in this context, that the amendments to the Constitution adopted in 2020 have not only strengthened the position and influence of our parliament – and it is perfectly obvious that we have strengthened our parliamentarism – but they have also created conditions for further developing

Russia's independent, sovereign legislation and national jurisdiction without lectures and interference from any outside force. It is the people and the people alone that are the source of power in our country.

Its representatives – the parliamentary parties – for all the competition between them, are invariably acting from the same position when it comes to fundamental national interests and the resolution of our Fatherland's defense and security issues.

This kind of patriotic attitude is clear and inherent in our people, always supported by the majority, the overwhelming majority of Russians. Every election and all public opinion polls have confirmed this, and this cannot be otherwise anyway because love for the Motherland is one of the key foundations of Russian statehood and the most important value for our society, which invariably manifests itself at critical times for the country.

Such unity of the people is a great value and a guarantee that Russia will be able to stand up to the most complex challenges and threats, and will confidently go through any trial. This has always been so, and so it will be now.

In this regard, I would like to emphasise again: all the goals of the special military operation launched on February 24 will definitely be attained in order to guarantee peace and security for the residents of the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics, of Russian Crimea, and our entire country in a historical perspective.

We must be aware and confident that our soldiers and officers have averted a real danger posed to our Motherland. Their courage, determination, and heroism have prevented a larger conflict that would have unfolded on our territory, but following someone else's scenarios.

The forces that have always pursued a policy of containing Russia – historically indeed, they did so in ancient times, and you know very well why they did this – they do not want such a huge and independent country that is too big for their ideas. They believe it endangers them simply by the fact of its existence. Although this is far from reality; it is they who endanger the world.

We have not forgotten the barbarous plans of the Nazis for the Soviet people – to drive them out. You remember, don't you? They wanted to force those who could work

to work like slaves, do slave labour in bondage. Those who were not wanted were supposed to be sent beyond the Urals or to the North to extinction. All this was recorded in documents, in historical documents. We remember this.

We also remember how the Western states encouraged terrorists and criminals in the North Caucasus in the early 1990s and 2000s, how they exploited the problems of our past, real problems, injustices of the past as regards entire peoples, including the peoples of the Caucasus. But they did all this not to make us better, not at all. They did all this to bring the problems of the past to us today, to encourage separatist attitudes in our country and eventually to split and destroy it. This is why they did all this. They wanted to drive us into the backwoods. Many have tried to do the same to Russia throughout all eras.

They did not reach their goal but could not accept their failure, that we managed to hold out against this onslaught at the time. This is why they later launched large-scale preparations for an economic war against Russia, using any excuse, and sometimes without any excuse at all, to impose more and more sanctions on us; but today's plans to strangle us economically have also fallen through.

In addition, our enemies have been expediting the development of new "geopolitical weapons." These weapons are basically nothing new, but they obviously gave them new motivation and a new impetus. They placed their bets on Russophobia and neo-Nazis and were impudently, unceremoniously turning our neighbor Ukraine into an "anti-Russia" year after year.

I would like to recall that when Russia had a benevolent, I would say, a friendly, comradely, fraternal attitude to the creation of an independent Ukrainian state, we thought, of course, that it would be a friendly state, that we could go further together, strengthening and developing each other and creating the most competitive conditions for progress – yes, in new and historical conditions. No one could imagine the creation of an "anti-Russia" on historical Russian territory. We simply cannot allow this to happen, and so it all comes down to a conflict, a direct conflict. Ukraine was pushed into direct confrontation with Russia, our country. Let me remind you that this was, unfortunately, all laid out, including an armed attack on Crimea and Donbass, in Ukraine's doctrinal documents of today, while at the same time, the Ukrainian people were allotted the destiny of "expendable material." I believe a large part of the Ukrainian people are coming to realise this.

The entire course of recent events, including the Kiev regime's claims to possess nuclear weapons, the deployment of a network of Western biolabs on Ukrainian territory, the seamless supplies of cutting-edge weapons to Ukraine, has confirmed that our reaction to those cynical plans was correct and timely.

Colleagues,

I would like to emphasise once again that our soldiers and officers, and the Donbass militia are heroically doing their duty, and as I said, all their goals and objectives will be met.

But I would also like to note something I spoke about at the beginning of the special military operation. Let me emphasise once again: if anyone intends to intervene from the outside and create a strategic threat to Russia that is unacceptable to us, they should know that our retaliatory strikes will be lightning-fast. We have the tools we need for this, the likes of which no one else can claim at this point. We will not just brag; we will use them if necessary. And I want everyone to know this; we have made all the decisions on this matter.

Colleagues,

I would like to thank all the parties in the State Duma and the Federation Council for their firmness, solidarity and support, for ensuring the high pace and quality of lawmaking in close cooperation with the Government of the Russian Federation. I hope the regional legislators will work just as intensively and will just as quickly coordinate their activities with the regional executive authorities.

I am referring to the many packages of anti-sanction measures adopted in the past two months, dozens of important laws and by-laws, which have already passed through the local legislatures and through Russian parliament.

I would like to note that specific decisions will be made in the near future on the indexation of pensions and all social benefits, as well as the salaries of specialists employed in the public sector. To ensure practical implementation of this policy, I ask the parliamentarians to carefully work out the necessary amendments and legal mechanisms.

These and the other decisions we have been making are aimed at providing direct assistance to the most vulnerable categories of the population – families with children and senior citizens. The key industries, strategic enterprises, small and medium-sized businesses are also receiving and will continue to receive support. As a result, by taking the measures I have just mentioned, we have not just softened, but, as I said, we have repelled, blocked the very first crushing blow – as the West believed it to be – of the illegitimate sanctions against our country.

Our banking system, national currency, transport, trade, and the economy in general have withstood the shock and have not crumbled. On the contrary, they now have good resources for development, for the launch of new projects in infrastructure and industry, and for developing and unlocking the potential of all our regions. Undoubtedly, this is the result of a balanced and responsible socioeconomic policy over the recent years, the implementation of our national projects, and the result of your, my colleagues, concerted and energetic efforts amid today's extraordinary circumstances.

I want you to partner with the ministries and departments, governors' teams, as I mentioned earlier, and the business, scientific and expert communities in order to continue to develop new, effective and well-thought-out anti-crisis measures, to strengthen parliamentary control from within over the implementation of decisions, and to support our people.

It is important to ensure not only stability in the economy, the domestic market, and the regular operation of industrial enterprises, but to strengthen our country's industrial and technological sovereignty and even global leadership in certain areas. This is an absolutely feasible task in areas where we have the required scientific expertise, engineering schools and production base, and we do have that in our country.

How many aircraft did we make before? Carrier companies were happy with buying foreign-made equipment which, indeed, boasts advantages in terms of noise levels and fuel consumption, but our manufacturers should strive to achieve these standards. However, they could hardly overcome this challenge in a situation where the domestic market was flooded with foreign manufacturers; that is the problem. And it is so with most products. However, wherever possible, wherever, to reiterate, we have advanced schools, engineers and readily available potential, this potential needs to be

developed. We have many such areas. Many areas of production, and high-tech production at that, see good, new and modern opportunities opening up.

As I have said, we will counter any crude and often inept external restrictions, the destruction of all civilised rights and agreements and attempts to isolate us with greater freedom of entrepreneurship, openness to honest partnerships, respect and reliable protection of owners and genuine investors. All these goals require the direct involvement of the deputies at the federal and regional levels alike.

I would like to ask you personally to work directly with the heads of municipalities and companies, businesses, NGOs and work teams to help them resolve their problems and eventually grant them additional systemic support measures. I would like to add that United Russia bears special responsibility for this as the leading party. But I am addressing all parliamentary parties now – I am asking you to work together.

In general, I would like to ask you to have direct contact with the people. It is no longer important now, not significant whose voters they are and whether any of them voted at all. It is important to devote time and attention to all these people, to respond if you are asked for help and protection. Sometimes people are just asking for advice and it is necessary to respond to this, too.

And there is one more important task for those who work in committees on international affairs or friendship groups with their foreign counterparts. I understand that it has become impossible and also pointless to work in some associations, for example, PACE. In general, many of these formats were established in the early 1990s not to harmonise relations in Europe but to influence the post-Soviet space. We understand this. But these instruments have become obsolete. Nobody needs them anymore. Let them deal with their own issues; let them campaign for higher wages and resolution to their mounting problems. We will not spend time talking about them here. This applies to human rights and women's rights or, say, women's inequality in the workplace. Europe and the States have many problems like this, so let them deal with their own problems.

But at this time, we need to use any accessible format or channel for parliamentary diplomacy in Europe, Asia, Africa and America, as much as we can – those that have remained. Direct contact can never hurt because we have many supporters in all global regions, I assure you, although you know this yourselves. But it is necessary to work

with them to justify our position with arguments, to uphold the truth and to bring information to the people who want to know it, true information.

Speaking at a Prosecutor General's Office Board meeting the day before yesterday, I mentioned the need to create a detailed and incontrovertible evidence base covering all the heinous crimes and violations of international humanitarian law committed by the neo-Nazis and foreign mercenaries who are arriving in Ukraine in great numbers. The other day, several of them were destroyed, and several others were detained. The Defence Ministry will present them to the public soon. These atrocities will certainly receive an objective legal assessment. However, it is important to raise these issues at the international level, including at the parliamentary level, even now.

I mentioned earlier Kiev's attempt, which was prevented, to physically eliminate some of our journalists through terrorist attacks. Here is what I have to say in this regard.

Those criminals, terrorists have been neutralised and detained and their actions are being investigated. But it is no secret that such methods – killing their own journalists and politicians right on the street – have been used quite often in Ukraine in recent years. Now, they decided to take this practice to our country.

No doubt, we will do our best to protect the people who work at official Russian television and radio channels, the people who work online and promote patriotism, people who make up the vast majority of our country's media space. But we must be aware that such a threat exists. Of course, we cannot assign guards from the FSO, the FSB or the National Guard to everyone, but we will do and must do our best to ensure their safety.

Here is what I would like to say, and what I am absolutely sure of. Any attempts to intimidate the people who work in the media space, to intimidate Russian journalists who have a patriotic position, are doomed. On the contrary, I do not doubt for a single second that these attempts will result in even more people joining their ranks to show that we have people who are not afraid of anything and who are ready to and will uphold our country's interests.

Colleagues,

There are a quite a few pressing items on your agenda. I wish you luck and every success in your future work. I congratulate everyone on our upcoming great, main holiday – the Day of the Great Victory. I am sure that uncompromising will, courage and loyalty to the Fatherland will always inspire you and all of us.

Thank you very much for your attention.

I wish you all the best. Thank you.

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