

# Putin Oversees Massive Parade Attended by Two Dozen World Leaders



Russian servicemen take part in the Victory Day military parade in Moscow, Russia, Friday, May 9, 2025.

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia on Friday celebrated the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, as President Vladimir Putin presided over a massive parade of tanks, missiles and troops through Red Square and welcomed over two dozen world leaders.

Victory Day, which Russia marks on May 9, is the country's most important secular holiday. The parade and other festivities underline Moscow's efforts to project its global power and cement the alliances.

Friday's parade was the largest and drew the most global leaders to Moscow in a decade, including high-profile guests like Chinese President Xi Jinping, who sat next to Putin, and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Their attendance underscored how Putin has tried to emphasize the failure of the West to turn Russia into a global pariah.

"It's again showing that Russia is not isolated, that Russia is seen as a very legitimate victorious nation that is among victors in World War II," said Alexander Gabuev, director of Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center.

"Russia is standing tall among the so-called global majority," Gabuev said, adding that the attendance of Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico showed that "Russia has allies even within the Western camp" and marked a major public relations vic-

tory for Putin.

Addressing the crowd in Red Square, Putin praised Russian troops fighting in Ukraine, saying that "we are proud of their courage and determination, their spiritual force that always has brought us victory."

The parade featured over 11,500 troops and more than 180 military vehicles, including tanks, armored infantry vehicles and artillery. As a reminder of Russia's nuclear might, huge Yars nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles launchers rolled across Red Square. Also among the weaponry on display were drones carried on military trucks, a tribute to their pivotal role in the conflict.

Fighter jets of Russian air force's aerobatic teams flew by in close formation, followed by jets that trailed smoke in the colors of the national flag.

After the parade, Putin hosted foreign leaders at a Kremlin reception and sat down with Lula for a bilateral meeting. More sessions were planned, officials said.

Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump exchanged "warm words" and "congratulations on the occasion of our common holiday" through their aides, the Russian leader's foreign policy adviser Yuri Ushakov told state Channel One TV.

Victory Day festivities this year were overshadowed by Ukrainian

drone attacks targeting Moscow and severe disruptions at the capital's airports. Aeroflot on Wednesday canceled more than 100 flights to and from Moscow, and delayed over 140 others as the military repelled Ukrainian drone attacks on the capital.

Russian authorities tightened security ahead of the parade and cellphone internet outages were reported amid electronic countermeasures aimed at foiling more potential drone attacks.

Military parades and other festivities were also held in scores of other cities across Russia amid tight security. As a historic tribute, Putin's hometown of St. Petersburg symbolically regained its Soviet-era name of Leningrad for a day Friday and Volgograd temporarily reverted to Stalingrad, as it was known during World War II.

Putin had declared a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire starting May 7 to coincide with the Victory Day celebrations, but warned that Russian troops would retaliate to any attacks. Moscow has been reluctant to accept a U.S.-proposed 30-day truce that Ukraine has accepted, linking it to a halt in Western arms supplies to Ukraine and Kyiv's mobilization effort, conditions Ukraine and its Western allies have rejected.

Ukrainian authorities reported scores of Russian strikes Friday that killed at least two people in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions and damaged buildings. A Russian drone also struck a civilian vehicle in Zaporizhzhia, critically injuring a man and also wounding his wife.

Russian authorities have fiercely denied allegations of war crimes. Asked about the tribunal on Friday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Moscow "will not be reacting to this."

Standing alongside top Ukrainian government officials in Lviv, EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said the tribunal's launch will mean that "nobody can be left unpunished for the crimes committed."

Most of Europe marks the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II on May 8.

## China Says Has Full Confidence in Ability to Manage U.S. Trade Issues



Vice Foreign Minister Hua Chunying

MALIPO, China (AFP) - China has full confidence in its ability to manage U.S. trade issues, Vice Foreign Minister Hua Chunying said on Friday.

"We have no fear," Hua told a small group of reporters at a middle school in a rural county in southwestern China, adding that the trade policy of the U.S. administration cannot be sustained.

The weekend talks involving top U.S. and Chinese economic and trade officials are widely seen as a first step toward resolving a trade war that has disrupted the global economy. President Donald Trump said on Thursday that the U.S. tariffs on Beijing of 145 percent would likely come down.

"We have full confidence," Hua said during a Beijing-organized trip to Malipo county to showcase China's efforts to build up rural economies.

"We do not want any kind of war with any country. But we have to face up to the reality. As you can see, people have full confidence in our capability to overcome all the difficulties."

Trump's tariffs on many of the United States' trading partners, including China, are increasingly weighing on a world economy which for decades had benefited from predictable and relatively free trade.

Many economists are calling the Trump tariffs a "demand shock" to the world economy which, by making imports more expensive for American businesses and consumers, will sap activity elsewhere.

"What the United States is doing cannot be sustained," Hua said. "Ordinary people in the U.S. already feel suffering from the tariff war."

The U.S. administration will come back to "normal," she said.

A formidable set of cards that includes granting access to its vast market and an ability to withstand economic pain will allow Beijing to play hardball in upcoming trade talks with the United States in Geneva, analysts say.

Trade between the world's two largest economies has nearly skidded to a halt since U.S. President Donald Trump slapped China with various rounds of levies that began as retaliation for Beijing's alleged role in a devastating fentanyl crisis.

With additional measures justified by Trump as efforts to rebalance the trade relationship and prevent the United States from being "ripped off," tariffs on many Chinese products now reach as high as 145 percent — with cumulative duties on some goods soaring to a staggering 245 percent.

Beijing has responded with 125 percent tariffs on U.S. imports, along with other measures targeting American firms.

Beijing has vowed to stick to its guns and insisted its demand that all U.S. tariffs be lifted remains "unchanged."

Analysts say, however, China is in no major rush to make a deal.

"Beijing can impose some pain on the United States," Chong Ja Ian, associate professor of political science at National University of Singapore, told AFP.

China's core strengths going into the talks are its huge domestic market, as well as "key technologies and control of a significant proportion of processed rare earth minerals," Chong said.

## 75% of Illegal Weapons Seized Originate in U.S., Says Mexico

MEXICO CITY (Reuters) - Approximately 75 percent of the more than 10,000 illegal weapons seized in Mexico between October 2024 and April 2025 came from the United States, Mexican Secretary of Security and Citizen Protection Omar Garcia Harfuch said Thursday.

Since launching Operation Northern Border on Feb 5, authorities have seized 2,627 firearms, more than 416,000 cartridges and 13,000 magazines, the official said when presenting the re-

sults of a security report during the government's daily morning press conference.

Mexican authorities have long urged Washington to strengthen efforts against the relentless southbound flow of American-bought firearms -- so vast that Mexico dubs it the "Iron River", with some 250,000 guns smuggled across the border each year.

According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, roughly 70 percent of the weapons traced from Mexican crime

scenes between 2014 and 2018 originated in the United States.

Most recently, as the United States ramps up efforts to curb drug trafficking, Mexican leaders have likewise intensified calls for joint operations to stem the tide of high-powered firearms.

Last week, U.S. President Donald Trump ordered the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and other agencies to intensify efforts against arms trafficking at the Mexican border.

## Cardinal Prevost Becomes Pope Leo XIV



Newly elected Pope Leo XIV, Cardinal Robert Prevost appears on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, at the Vatican, May 8, 2025.

VATICAN CITY (Dispatches) - Robert Francis Prevost was elected Pope Leo XIV on Thursday, becoming the first American to lead the world's 1.4 billion Catholics.

The bells of St Peter's Basilica and churches across Rome rang out and crowds rushed towards the square to watch the balcony of the basilica, which had been fitted out with red curtains for the first address to the

world by the 267th pope, who was introduced in Latin with his chosen papal name.

Leo, successor to the late Francis, appeared on the balcony of St Peter's Basilica to deliver the first address of his ministry Francis died aged 88 after a 12-year papacy during which he sought to forge a more compassionate Church — but provoked anger from many conservatives with his progressive approach.

Leo XIV now faces a momentous task: as well as asserting his moral voice on a conflict-torn global stage, he must try to unite a divided Church and tackle burning issues such as the continued fall-out from the sexual abuse scandal.

The legacy of sexual abuse cast a long shadow over Francis's papacy. He was slow to grasp the scale and systemic nature of the problem, and Pope Leo XIV's approach will inevitably also come under intense scrutiny.

## North Korea's Kim Leads Missile Test, Stresses Nuclear Force Readiness



A handout photo shows a missile launch, in North Korea, May 8, 2025.

SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised a test of a short-range ballistic missile and long-range artillery on Thursday and stressed the importance of combat readiness of the country's nuclear forces, state media reported on Friday.

The test, which also included an inspection of the operational reliability of its "nuclear trigger" system, was designed to ensure the rapid response posture to counter the sensitive regional military climate, KCNA news agency said.

South Korea and Japan on Thursday reported multiple ballistic missiles were fired from North Korea's east coast in what was believed to be a performance test of short-range missiles that had been already de-

ployed.

KCNA said the 600 mm multiple launch rocket systems and tactical ballistic missile Hwasong-11 were mobilized for the test.

Ahead of the missile launches, there was an inspection of a nuclear defense system, dubbed by the North as "nuclear trigger", KCNA said.

"Kim Jong Un said that it is very important to steadily perfect the normal combat readiness of the nuclear force" to deter war and fight war, "KCNA said.

"He said that the DPRK should continue to direct efforts to steadily improving the long-range precision striking capability and efficiency of weapons systems," KCNA said, using the short form for the country's official name.

## News in Brief

SAO PAULO (Reuters) - Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Friday slammed U.S. President Donald Trump's trade policies and sweeping tariffs, saying they harm multilateralism as he met with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Moscow. "The latest decisions by the U.S. president to unilaterally put tariffs on trade with all countries in the world undermine the great idea of free trade and strengthening multilateralism," Lula said during a bilateral meeting with Putin. Lula intends to strengthen Brazil's strategic partnership with Russia, citing "political, commercial, cultural, scientific and technological interests" as he sees room to increase trade.

KYIV (AP) - Ukraine's main security agency said Friday it had arrested two people on suspicion of spying for Hungary by gathering intelligence on Ukraine's military in the west of the country. In a statement, the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) said that two suspects, both former members of the Ukrainian military, had been detained and face charges of treason, which is punishable by life imprisonment. It was the first time in Ukraine's history that a Hungarian espionage operation had been discovered, the statement said.

OTTAWA (AFP) -- Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen spoke Thursday about strengthening defense ties between their two countries, according to a statement from Carney's office. "The leaders discussed working together to strengthen collective defense and security, including as close partners in the Arctic and at NATO," it said, noting that both sides looked forward to deepening their relationship and agreed to stay in close contact. Both countries are under the threat of U.S. annexation. US President Donald Trump recently renewed his threat of taking over Greenland, once a Danish colony and now an autonomous territory in Denmark. In an NBC News interview, Trump said he would not "rule it out" making the island a part of the United States.

BEIJING (Reuters) - A helicopter crash in Sri Lanka has killed six military personnel, an Air Force official said on Friday. A Bell 212 helicopter had crashed into the Maduru Oya reservoir in central Sri Lanka with a dozen armed forces personnel on board. Six died after they were rescued and rushed to hospital, Sri Lanka Air Force spokesman Group Captain Eranda Geeganage said. "The helicopter was assigned to conduct a grappling exercise at a passing-out parade. Four special forces personnel and two Air Force gunmen died of their injuries," Geeganage told Reuters.

LONDON (Reuters) - The cause of the fire at an electricity substation that forced Britain's Heathrow Airport to shut down for almost a day remains unknown, the National Energy System Operator said in an interim report. The closure of Heathrow, the busiest airport in Europe, on March 21 cost airlines tens of millions of pounds and stranded thousands of passengers. It also raised questions about the resilience of Britain's infrastructure. NESO, which manages the country's electricity network, said it would produce a final report on the outage in June, with recommendations on the resilience of energy systems and plans for response and restoration.