

Dispatch from Moscow

Description

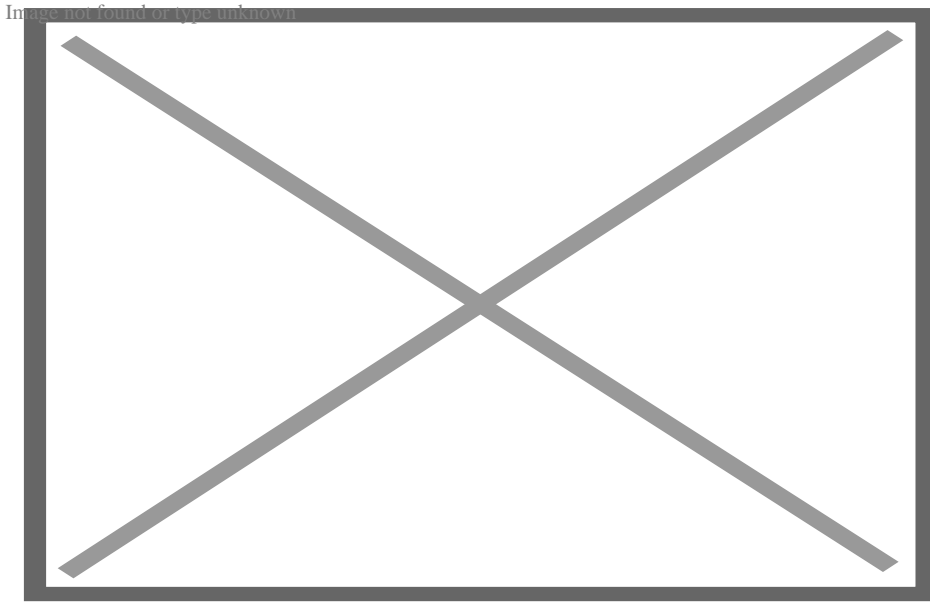


 Image not found or type unknown **By John Helmer, Moscow** [@bears_with](#)

Russians have never had a higher level of confidence in the Army since the end of World War II, according to a national poll just published by the independent Levada Centre of Moscow.

This also means a record level of confidence in the General Staff to outwit the principal enemy of the country, the United States, and defeat it and its allies on the Ukrainian battlefield. Most Russians now believe this war will take the Russian Army at least another six months, and more likely a year to finish.

This new poll signals that most Russians believe it prudent not to fight the US with the same intensity in two long wars at the same time – in the Ukraine and in the Middle East — because the Army has decided so. This is despite the overwhelming Russian support for the Palestinians in their fight for survival against Israel. No poll is allowed to measure and [publish this support](#), and the emotional reaction the majority of Russians feels towards the operations of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the US military to destroy the population of Gaza.

“We should not, we have no right and we cannot allow ourselves to be carried away by emotions,” President Vladimir Putin announced on [October 30](#).

“We must clearly understand who in reality is behind the tragedy of peoples in the Middle East and in other regions around the world, who has been organising this lethal chaos and who benefits from it. In my opinion, it has already become clear to everyone, as the masterminds brazenly act in the open. These are the current ruling elites in the United States and its satellites who are the main beneficiaries of the global instability that they use to extract their bloody rent. Their strategy is also clear. The United

States as a global superpower is becoming weaker and is losing its position, and everyone sees and understands this.”

This is the president running for re-election in five months’ time, speaking directly to Russian voters, reflecting what the polls on his desk tell him they already believe.

The Levada pollsters report there is a small increase in war weariness across the country, with 56% now saying they favour the start of peace talks soon, compared with 48% measured a year ago, in September 2022. This, however, reflects public belief in the success of the Army in defeating the Ukrainian-NATO counteroffensive, and in advancing Russian control of the new Donbass territories and along the front line from Kharkov to Odessa. “In October 2023,” Levada [reports](#), “62% of Russians across the country believe that the special military operation is progressing successfully (12% very successfully, 50% rather successfully), over the past 5 months their number has increased slightly. The opposite point of view is held by 21%.”

The Levada survey [reveals](#) also that “Moscow stands out from other localities. Muscovites are less willing to move on to peace talks — only 38% hold this opinion, while in other localities about half of the respondents believe that it is necessary to start peace talks. Among those who approve of Vladimir Putin’s activities as president, there are slightly more supporters of peace negotiations than supporters of the continuation of hostilities — 51% and 42%, respectively. The majority (72%) of those who disapprove of the president’s activities believe that it is necessary to move on to peace negotiations.”

Long war is the assessment of the higher educated, higher class Russian urbanites over forty.

The Levada survey was conducted by face-to-face interview in the homes of a nationwide sample of 1,607. The polling was carried out between [October 19 and 25](#).

Levada’s independence in conducting its polls has drawn the Russian government regulator’s requirement that it publishes the following notice with every report: “This material (information) was produced and distributed by a foreign agent of Levada Centre or concerns the activities of a foreign agent of Levada Centre.”

Levada has not yet published an English translation of the new poll results which were released on October 31. Read the full report in Russian [here](#).

Source: <https://www.levada.ru/>

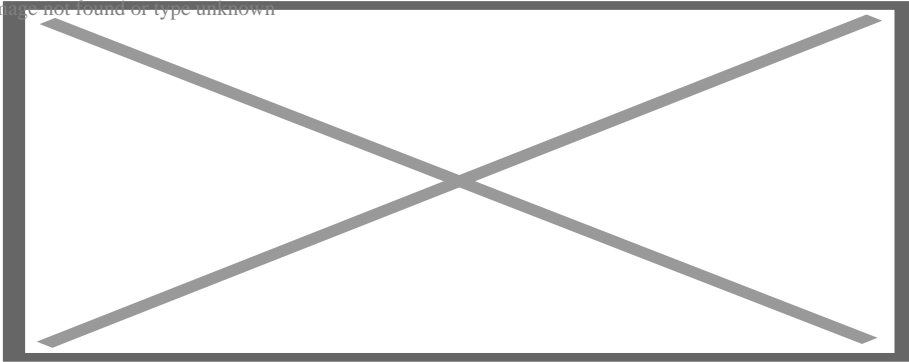
[...]

Levada also reveals an unusual analysis it has carried out to gauge the nature of Russian sentiment for waging war against the country’s enemies. The result is the first clear signal that most Russians trust the Army to defeat the enemy on the battlefield more than they trust Putin to negotiate an agreement on paper with US and NATO officials.

“An experiment was conducted within the framework of this survey. Using a random number generator, the respondents were divided into two equal groups, each of which was asked a question in one of two formulations. The experiment showed that the majority of respondents (70%) would support V[ladimir] Putin’s decision if the president decided to end the military conflict with Ukraine. However, if Putin decided to end the conflict on condition of the return of the annexed territories, only a third (34%)

would support his actions.”

Image not found of type unknown



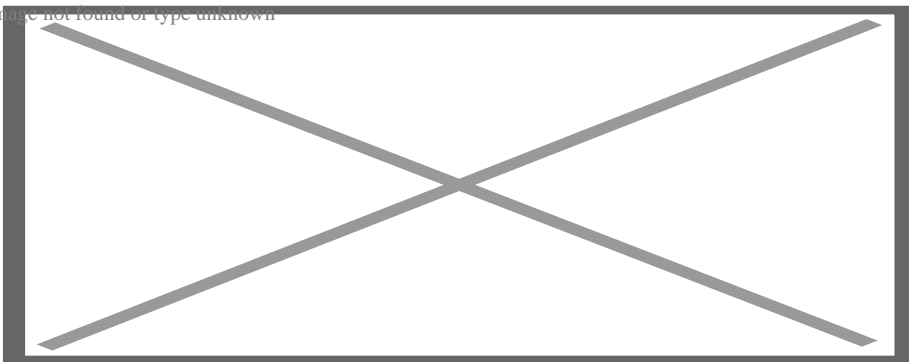
Source: <https://www.levada.ru/>

No Russian analysis has been published to date to extrapolate from this finding, and its presidential election context, to the way Russia’s General Staff, Defense Ministry, Foreign Ministry, and the Kremlin are working on their responses to the war against the Palestinians.

In the special session Putin called on Monday of the major ministries and security chiefs, he began by [saying](#) that “the Defense Minister [Sergei Shoigu] is back from his official trip abroad, and he will brief us on its outcomes and report on the progress of the special military operation.” Shoigu had just returned from China. What he [said](#) there in public was that Russia was fighting a world war on three fronts. The US-led allies were “covering up the buildup of military force in the Asia-Pacific region with an ostentatious desire for dialogue, imposing alliances and lines of operational interaction on partners...Having provoked an acute crisis in Europe, the West is seeking to spread conflict potential to the Asia-Pacific region, and in several directions.”

The war in Gaza is one of these “directions”, one of the war fronts, Shoigu said in Beijing; and Putin repeated the next day.

Image not found of type unknown



Left: Vice chairman of China’s Central Military Commission, General Zhang Youxia with Shoigu in Beijing on October 29. Right: Putin with Shoigu at extreme right in Moscow, October 30. The lead image is another Kremlin photograph of the same meeting.

“I will repeat again”, Putin said, “the ruling elites of the United States and its satellites are behind the tragedy of the Palestinians, the massacre in the Middle East in general, the conflict in Ukraine, and many other conflicts in the world – in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and so on. This has become obvious to

everyone. It is they who install their military bases everywhere, who use military force on every pretext and without any pretext, who send weapons to conflict areas. They are also channelling financial resources, including to Ukraine and the Middle East, and fuelling hatred in Ukraine and the Middle East.”

“They are not achieving results on the battlefield, so they want to split us from within, as far as Russia is concerned, to weaken us and sow confusion. They do not want Russia to participate in solving any international or regional problems, including in the Middle East settlement. They are not satisfied at all when someone does not act or speak exactly as they are instructed. They believe only in their own exclusivity, in being allowed to do anything...I would like to say once again that we must realise where the root of evil lies. We must know where the spider that is trying to entangle the entire planet and the whole world in its cobweb is. It wants to ensure our strategic defeat on the battlefield, and it is using people on the territory of contemporary Ukraine who have been brainwashed by it for decades. I would like to stress once again that, while fighting this enemy in the course of the special military operation, we are boosting the positions of all those who are struggling for their independence and sovereignty.”

“We know and see how the Ukrainian leadership applauds the Nazis of the Second World War, who were guilty of the Holocaust victims, who personally took part in these crimes, and today, under the guidance of their Western patrons, are trying to instigate pogroms in Russia. By the way, I am not sure whether all the leading circles in the same states are aware of this. It would not be a bad idea for those who care so much about the citizens of Israel to investigate what their security services are doing in Ukraine, whether they are trying to instigate pogroms in Russia. Scum, that’s all. There is no other way to put it.”

“But those who really stand up for truth and justice, who fight against evil and oppression, against racism and neo-Nazism, which the West encourages, are now fighting at the front – near Donetsk, Avdeyevka, on the Dnieper. I repeat: these are our soldiers and officers. And the choice of a real man, a true warrior, is to take up arms and stand in line with his brothers, to be there where the fate of Russia and, indeed, of the whole world, including the future of the Palestinian people, is being [decided](#).”

This is the first time in public Putin has linked the war goal of denazification of the Ukraine with the “future of the Palestinian people”. Putin is implying what the unpublished Russian polls show the majority of the country thinks – between the fascist regime in Kiev and the Israeli government in Tel Aviv, there is no difference.

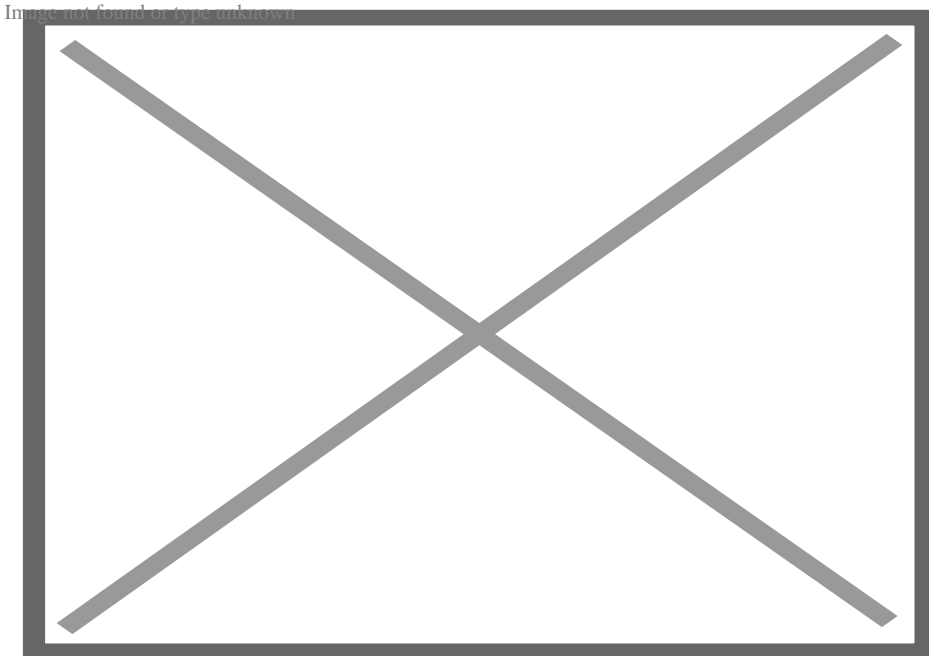
This is as explicitly as Putin has gone since [October 7](#) to rebuff the line in several of the state propaganda organs of Moscow that the Arab war is not Russia’s fight, and that Russia should stay out of it.

“There’s something much bigger left unsaid,” a well-informed Moscow source adds, “which puts the people behind the war effort in the last week, and that is what Israel is doing to Gaza. That is what Brits and Americans did to Dresden and Hiroshima. That is what Germans did to Leningrad and Stalingrad. Russians, accused of anti-semitism and sympathy for Hamas by the usual media mouthpieces put two and two together and understand what awaited Russians of Donbass. They see Gaza and understand the race hatred and cruelty of the western axis. The bombing of Gaza reminds Russians what was done to their grandparents and what would be done to them if they do not win this war.”

What remains secret, Moscow sources caution, is the situation assessment of the General Staff now

that the IDF is establishing a massive armoured force across northern Gaza; how Hamas plans to fight on from the tunnels; and how long the Palestinian forces can hold out before Hezbollah, the West Bank Palestinians, and the Arab-Iranian units on the Golan front will launch their promised counter-offensive. That is, if (*repeat if*) they move as they have been publicly threatening to do.

MAP OF ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES, IDF MOVES INTO GAZA



TO ENLARGE AND READ, CLICK ON TABLE.

Source: <https://t.me/Slavyangrad/71709?single>

“The moral high ground is already held by Russia as Putin has just said,” a Moscow source comments, “while the state propaganda line portrays Russia as against ‘terrorism’, ‘genocide’, and ‘fascism’.” On the battlefield, he says, the situation is “far more grim. The satellite pictures show they [IDF] now have about 400 vehicles in total. They will overrun all of North Gaza while flooding or gassing the tunnels.”

For how long can Hamas defend against this without the opening of the other fronts to force the diversion of the IDF, stretch the US rearm and resupply capacities even further, and lengthen the war? There are pro-Russian military veteran sources who believe not long enough. “The Iranians are showing themselves to be blowhards. Hezbollah is afraid of the US response. Both know they risk losing power and position if the war escalates. Israel has called their bluff. Islamic ‘unity’ is proving to be hollow — a dead end.”

The Moscow source concurs. “When this is over, it will take away any chance of change to status quo for at least a decade. The only defeat it appears will still come in Ukraine but not in Palestine.

The Levada poll reveals that Russian public opinion trusts the Army to do what’s best, and Putin to say what’s right.