

Putin says 'no one in the world has anything like' all-powerful nuclear missile

Russian President Vladimir Putin boasted Thursday that his country has developed a nuclear missile with an unlimited range and completely immune to enemy intercept.

Speaking during an annual state-of-the-nation speech in Moscow, Putin said the ballistic missile is capable of penetrating any missile defense and can reach virtually any target around the world. "No defense systems will be able to withstand it," he said.

NATO has nicknamed this missile — an RS-28 Sarmat rocket — "Satan 2." Russian media has claimed it could entirely wipe out an area the size of Texas or France.

Neither the White House nor the U.S. defense community offered immediate reaction. Putin has a track record of talking up his country's military and technological prowess.

Putin also unveiled what he said was Russia's new advanced weapons technology. His two-hour address included video clips of underwater drones and intercontinental missiles. Putin delivered a warning to the United States over its pursuit of anti-missile defense systems. "Efforts to contain Russia have failed, face it," he said.

"Nobody listened to us. Well, listen to us now," Putin added, referring to accusations that Washington has been violating non-nuclear proliferation agreements by assisting countries from Poland to Japan to establish global anti-missile systems.

It follows claims by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Wednesday that the U.S. is training armed forces in Europe on how to use nuclear weapons against Russia. In his Thursday address, Putin said its new nuclear rocket effectively renders U.S. missile defense systems around the world meaningless.

“No one in the world has anything like (this weapon),” Putin said. “It may appear someday, but by that time we will develop something new.”

Still, Malcom Chalmers, a defense expert at the Royal United Services Institute, a defense and security think tank, said it wasn't clear that Putin's announcement actually represented new or novel Russian military capability.

“This is Putin emphasizing that his country's new generation of missiles will be able to overcome any missile-defense systems,” he said. “Russia has been able to hit targets in the U.S. and around the world since the 1960s. We also need to view his words in the context of a Russian election this month. The topic has popular appeal.”

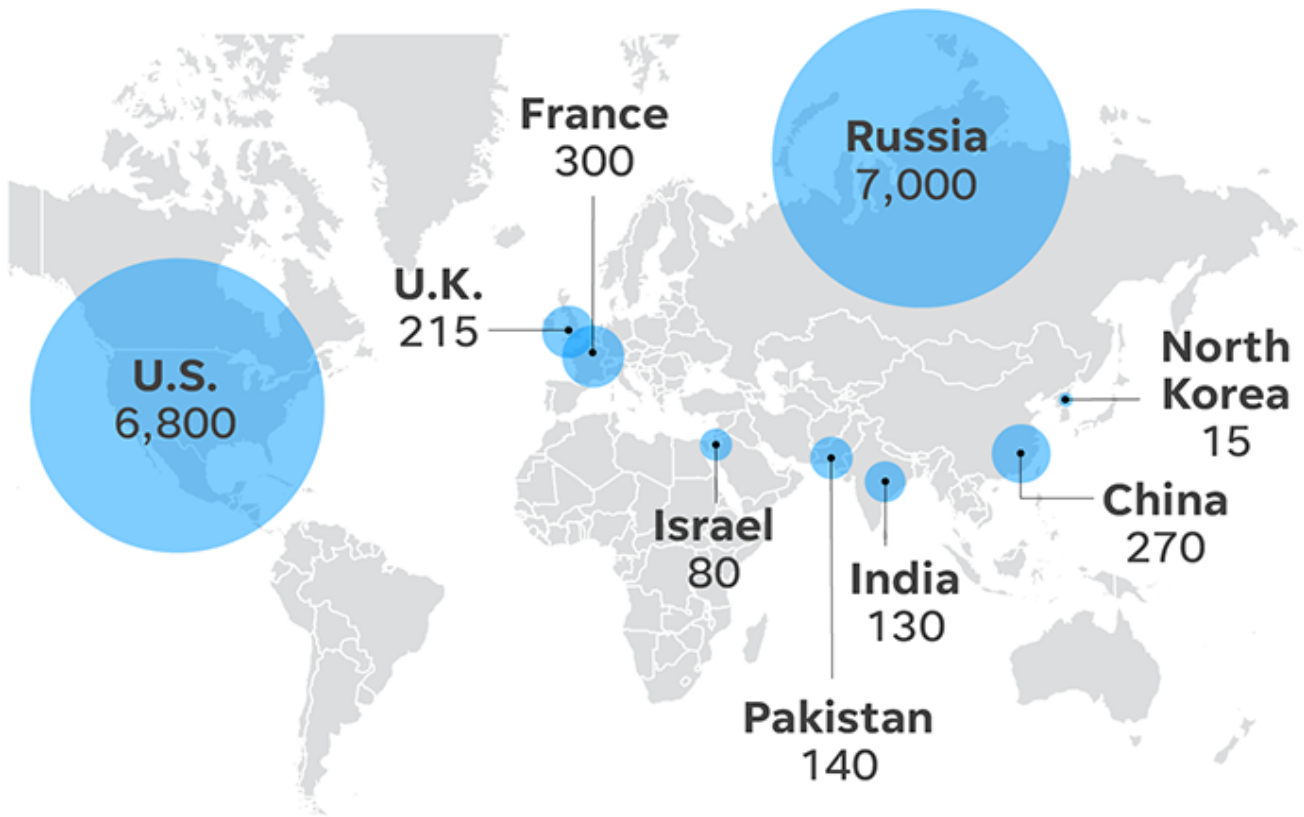
One of President Trump's first acts in office was to order Defense Secretary Jim Mattis to conduct a “nuclear posture review.” Mattis' report was published in February.

It concluded that the U.S. “now faces a more diverse and advanced nuclear-threat environment than ever before, with considerable dynamism in potential adversaries' development and deployment programs for nuclear weapons and delivery systems.”

The report intensely focuses on Russia, and to a lesser extent, China.

“They have added new types of nuclear capabilities to their arsenals, increased the salience of nuclear forces in their strategies and plans, and engaged in increasingly aggressive behavior, including in outer space and cyber space,” the report says.

U.S., Russia have 90% of the world's global nuclear warheads. Size of inventories:



SOURCE Arms Control Association
George Petras/USA TODAY

Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/03/01/russias-putin-boasts-all-powerful-nuclear-missile/384142002/>

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