
PUTIN SAYS RUSSIA WILL START SEIZING EUROPEAN VESSELS IF ITS SHIPS TARGETED

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Andrew Osborn and Felix Light

President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that Russia will respond in kind if [REDACTED] countries start to seize Russian merchant vessels and the commander of Russia's Pacific Fleet said his forces were ready to "inspect and detain" foreign vessels from what he called hostile states.

The comments, which Putin made as he oversaw navy drills in Russia's far east, come as the EU tries to [REDACTED] up pressure on Russia's so-called shadow fleet, expanding sanctions against hundreds of vessels and detaining some ships and [REDACTED] crews for checks. Some European governments have said they are exploring tougher maritime enforcement measures against [REDACTED] suspected of sanctions evasion.

"We can see that the authorities of certain countries, in violation of international maritime law, are attempting to [REDACTED] the movement of our economic operators vessels..., and have recently gone so far as to consider the possibility of seizing our [REDACTED] and selling off the property they have plundered from us," Putin said.

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