

La Russia sta trasformando il suo esercito in un arsenale ad alta tecnologia: ecco cosa succederà

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Dai sottomarini a propulsione nucleare ai droni alimentati dall'intelligenza artificiale, questi aggiornamenti sono destinati a trasformare la portata del campo di battaglia della Russia



FOTO D'ARCHIVIO. Un militare su un obice semovente Msta-S sull'Anello dei Giardini di Mosca prima di una prova della parata del Giorno della Vittoria. © Sputnik/Alexey Maishev

Nel 2026, il complesso militare-industriale russo è pronto a introdurre una nuova ondata di sistemi d'arma in quasi tutti i settori della guerra. Si prevede che diversi progetti di lunga data raggiungeranno fasi di test chiave o entreranno in servizio, mentre altri appariranno in configurazioni aggiornate, plasmate dalla recente esperienza operativa. Insieme, questi sviluppi offrono un'utile panoramica della direzione intrapresa dalla tecnologia militare russa nel breve termine.

RT offre una panoramica delle piattaforme e dei sistemi più significativi che probabilmente definiranno la prossima fase di modernizzazione delle forze armate russe: dai missili strategici e sottomarini ai sistemi di difesa aerea, dagli aerei da combattimento alle tecnologie senza pilota. Questi programmi riflettono un'attenzione costante alla sopravvivenza, all'automazione e al vantaggio asimmetrico, nonché un chiaro intento di integrare rapidamente nuove soluzioni nel servizio attivo.

In quest'ottica, gli sviluppi previsti per il 2026 non vanno considerati come prototipi speculativi, ma come aggiornamenti pratici destinati all'uso immediato da parte delle forze strategiche russe, della marina, dell'aeronautica e delle truppe di terra.

Aerei di quinta generazione: lo scacco matto del Su-75

Il primo volo del nuovo caccia supersonico monomotore e monoposto di quinta generazione, noto come Su-75 Checkmate, è previsto per il 2026. Il modello è stato presentato per la prima volta al MAKS Air Show nell'agosto 2021. Dopo la costruzione, il velivolo si sta preparando per i voli di prova.

Il Su-75 ha un enorme potenziale di esportazione ed è un'aggiunta molto ambita alla flotta di prima linea dell'Aeronautica Militare russa. Questo aereo sostituirà il MiG-29. Sul mercato globale, competerà con gli attuali velivoli di generazione 4++ come l'F-16 e altri.

Il Su-75 è progettato per essere stealth, manovrabile e supersonico. La sua versatilità lo rende adatto sia al combattimento aria-aria che alle missioni di attacco. Sarà il primo caccia a reazione monomotore costruito in Russia. I caccia di questa classe (ovvero MiG-21 e MiG-23) furono prodotti in Unione Sovietica e costituirono la spina dorsale dei caccia di prima linea dell'URSS per molti anni.



FOTO D'ARCHIVIO. Prototipo del caccia di quinta generazione Checkmate al MAKS- 2021 Air Show, Zhukovsky, Regione di Mosca, Russia. © Sputnik/Alexey Nikolsky

Deterrenza subacquea strategica: Progetto 09851 Khabarovsk

The Khabarovsk, a new Project 09851 nuclear-powered submarine constructed by the Sevmash company in Severodvinsk, is expected to begin sea trials in 2026.

The Khabarovsk is no usual submarine – it will serve as the main carrier of Poseidon nuclear-powered unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs) which are already undergoing testing. Currently, the submarine Belgorod is involved in these tests, but the Khabarovsk will serve as the primary carrier of the UUVs. Six launchers for Poseidon UUVs will be installed in the bow of the submarine, and it can also be equipped with torpedo weapons for self-defense.

The technical solutions used in the construction of the Khabarovsk submarine draw on the developments for another strategic Russian submarine – the Borei-A project. This ensures the successful completion, testing, and adoption of the submarine with the unique Poseidon system into the Russian Navy.



FILE PHOTO. Rollout ceremony of the nuclear-powered submarine Khabarovsk at the Sevmash shipyard, Severodvinsk, Russia. © Sputnik/Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation

Next-generation intercontinental missiles: Replacing the Topol-M

This year, we can also expect test launches of new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). In 2026-2027, they could begin to replace Topol-M missiles deployed in the late 1990s. Both silo-based and mobile-launched missile versions are likely to be tested.

While the specific capabilities of these new missiles remain unknown, it is reasonable to assume they will utilize more advanced solid propellant technology and potentially feature guided hypersonic warheads instead of traditional ballistic warheads. Unlike the payloads of Avangard missiles, these warheads could represent a second generation of ICBM hypersonic equipment.

Sarmat: The flagship of Russia's nuclear forces

The heavy liquid-fueled Sarmat ICBM is set to enter the final phase of its flight testing program. Once this stage is complete, the missile will be officially adopted into service and deployed within Russia's Strategic Rocket Forces division based in Uzhur. Sarmat will replace the older Voevoda ICBM which was developed in the late 1980s.

In terms of energy capabilities, Sarmat surpasses the Voevoda and any other ICBM worldwide; it will likely carry multiple payload options, including at least 10-14 conventional ballistic warheads or several Product 4202-class hypersonic gliding warheads utilized in the Avangard system. Its combat capabilities will make Sarmat the flagship of Russia's nuclear deterrent forces.



FILE PHOTO. Launch of a Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile from the Plesetsk cosmodrome, Russia. © Sputnik/Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation

Hypersonic strike at sea: Zircon and the Yasen-M fleet

The Zircon air-launched ballistic missile has proven itself in the Russian military operation in Ukraine, and production is expected to ramp up in 2026. Efforts are certainly underway to modernize these missiles. The K-572 Perm nuclear submarine of the Yasen-M 885M project, which is currently undergoing trials and is expected to enter service in 2026, will be equipped with new Zircon missiles.

This submarine will be the first operational platform to carry the underwater-launch variant of the Zircon missile. All Yasen-M class submarines that are currently under construction will also be supplied with these missiles. Eventually, earlier models of the Yasen class will be upgraded as well; this will significantly enhance the anti-ship and anti-aircraft capabilities of the Russian Navy.

Admiral Nakhimov: Restoring heavy surface combat power

In 2026, the heavy nuclear-powered missile cruiser Admiral Nakhimov will continue sea trials and could even complete them. We can expect demonstrations of its capability to launch Zircon hypersonic missiles alongside other weapon systems.

Once fully operational, Admiral Nakhimov is set to become the most powerful warship in the Russian Navy and one of the most heavily armed surface combatants in the world.



FILE PHOTO. Nuclear-powered missile cruiser Admiral Nakhimov at the Sevmash shipyard pier, Russia. © Sputnik/Alexey Kudenko

Strategic air and missile defense: S-500 Prometheus

Deployment of the S-500 Prometheus missile system will continue this year. Currently, this is Russia's most advanced anti-ballistic missile system, capable of countering virtually any ballistic missile threat.

These unique systems are expected to be positioned in high-risk areas and near critical sites that require robust protection against aerial attacks or threats from near space.

FILE PHOTO. S-500 air defense missile system during test launches at the Kapustin Yar test range, Russia. © Sputnik/Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation

Countering the drone threat: FPV interceptors and AI systems

Several types of intercept drones are being developed for the Russian Ground Forces. These drones are designed to protect against enemy FPV drones along the front lines. The creation of FPV interceptors utilizing AI in their control systems will ensure effective detection and guaranteed engagement of enemy kamikaze drones.

Importantly, the cost of this solution should be significantly lower than that of missiles for air defense systems. This urgent challenge can be addressed through the implementation of advanced digital systems in the mass production of drones.

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[2026 may not bring peace, but it may bring clarity.](#)

Ground robotics and the rise of unmanned formations

New types of ground drones are also being developed. Throughout 2025, we observed a significant increase in the use of ground robots in the zone of Russian military operation. This trend is set to continue in 2026, with various new drones being deployed, including firing point drones, anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) drones, mobile autonomous carriers for FPV drones, and drones designed for transporting injured personnel and ammunition.

Wherever wheeled or tracked ground robots can be utilized, they are expected to become integral to military operations. The groundwork for this has already been laid. In 2026, we expect the completion of the establishment of a new branch of the Russian Armed Forces dedicated to unmanned systems. While this is particularly useful for the ground forces, the navy and air force will also benefit from these developments.

Modern artillery for ground forces: Koalitsiya-SV

Ground troops anticipate the arrival of new Koalitsiya-SV 152mm self-propelled howitzers. These systems feature not only advanced electronics but also a new artillery platform comparable to the best Western analogues.

It's quite possible that the Koalitsiya will be adapted to a wheeled chassis similar to that of the Malva and Giatsint-K self-propelled artillery systems.

FILE PHOTO. Koalitsiya-SV self-propelled howitzer and a BTR-82A armored personnel carrier during a Victory Day parade rehearsal, Moscow Region, Russia. © Sputnik/Vadim Savitsky

Outlook

Taken together, the developments expected throughout 2026 demonstrate more than incremental upgrades – they reflect a coherent evolution of Russia’s armed forces across all domains. From strategic missiles and nuclear-powered submarines to advanced air defense, combat aircraft, and unmanned systems, the emphasis is on survivability, automation, and operational versatility.

These systems are not theoretical or experimental: They are being integrated into service-ready units, ready to reshape the capabilities of Russia’s strategic, naval, air, and ground forces. For observers of global security, 2026 offers a clear view of how the Russian military is modernizing not through sheer numbers, but through the careful deployment of technologically sophisticated, asymmetric, and highly adaptable tools of warfare.

In short, this year marks a critical phase in the transformation of the Russian military-industrial complex – a phase in which modernization and readiness converge, and where every new system contributes to a more resilient and capable defense posture.

[By Dmitry Kornev, military expert, founder and author of the MilitaryRussia project](#)

