

# *Russia Puts Troops on High Alert Ahead of Military Drills*

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Moscow, February 9 (RHC)-- Russia has put its troops on combat alert across the country's southwestern territories amid massive military drills meant to test the readiness of the military.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that troops were scrambled to the drill zone and put on high alert earlier in the day to mark the beginning of the military maneuver involving the staff of the Southern Military District.

Airborne troops and military transport aviation as well as the navy are also slated to take part in the exercise, Shoigu said during a meeting with top military commanders, adding that the war games are intended to test the ability of the troops to respond to extremist threats and other challenges.

He said the maneuver will include redeployment of air force units while bombing runs will also be carried out at shooting ranges. Russia's Southern Military District includes troops stationed in Crimea as well as forces in the North Caucasus and southwestern regions near the border with Ukraine.

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