

Eyes front! Female police cadets among 20,000 on parade as Russia marks victory over the Nazis

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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In immaculate uniforms and with pride written across their faces, these police cadets were among 20,000 taking part across Russia to commemorate victory over the Nazis in World War Two.

The female cadets took part in the nation's Victory Day military parades on Dvortsovaya Square, St Petersburg, alongside similar displays on Moscow's Red Square.

Anna Chapman, the former Russian spy-turned-TV presenter, was one of the guests of honour at the annual parade.

In a sea of gold braid, green fatigues and gleaming medals, the 29-year-old, who had been a sleeper spy in the U.S. before being expelled, was relatively restrained in muted clothing - though the colour of her dress was a very appropriate khaki.



Proud: Female Russian police cadets march through Dvortsovaya Square, in St Petersburg, during the Victory Day parades



© AFP/GETTY IMAGES

On parade: The women were part of 20,000 to take part in the commemoration of the end of World War Two

If she momentarily distracted some 20,000 troops from their ceremonial duties, Russia's massed servicemen soon snapped back to attention.

The parade is the centerpiece of Russia's most solemn secular holiday, both commemorating the Soviet Union's sacrifices in the war and asserting the potency of its modern military.

A total of 20,000 troops who strode in precision formation through the vast square outside the Kremlin were followed by more than 100 pieces of mobile military hardware, from armoured personnel carriers to lumbering Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile launchers.



Celebrity: Russia's favourite femme fatale Anna Chapman was one of the guests at the event to mark the anniversary of victory over the Nazis in World War Two. The parade took place in Moscow's Red Square

It concluded with a squadron of helicopters carrying flags over the square but, unusually for recent years, did not include warplanes.

Although Russian armed forces suffered from severe funding shortages and morale problems in the early years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the parade put forth the image of a spit-and-polish and vigorous military, with an emphasis on discipline and precision.

The parade announcer even praised the 'maximal synchronisation' with which the cars carrying Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and Moscow Military District commander Col.-Gen. Valery Gerasimov approached each other in the center of the square.

Medvedev told the crowd, which included many war veterans festooned with medals and ribbons, that restoring the military would continue.

'The state will continue to do everything to guarantee the dignity of military service, to actively upgrade the armed forces so that the troops will have the most modern equipment,' Medvedev said.



Show of strength: Russian howitzers roll down Red Square with the history museum in the background





Still raw: Veteran Lyudmila Anosova, 85, cries as she tells stories (left) while a navy officer hugs one of his comrades



On parade: Servicemen take part in the event which celebrates victory over Germany in World War Two

'Today Russia firmly upholds the principles of peaceful cooperation, consistently advocates for a security system and contributes to the overall effort to maintain global stability in the world,' he said in the speech from a tribune set up in front of the Lenin Mausoleum.

The mausoleum, the focal point of the square, was hidden behind an elaborate scrim painted to mark the holiday, reflecting the symbolic delicacy of commemorating a victory achieved by the Soviet regime that is now largely discredited.

Some of the marching military units carried period flags bearing the Communist hammer-and-sickle emblem.



Heads of state: Russian President Dmitry Medvedev (left) and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin at the Victory Day parade



Weapon of mass destruction: Russian Army Topol intercontinental ballistic missiles drive through the square as thousands watch



Bottoms up! Three veterans toast and down their vodka shots at the commemorations



Pomp and ceremony: Russian honour guards of the President's regiment carry flags to be presented during the event

Last year's Victory Day period was marked by repeated complaints from Medvedev and other officials that some countries denigrate the Soviet Union's contribution in WWII, in which some 26 million Soviets died, according to some estimates.

But Medvedev made no reference to the issue this year and made of a point of noting the efforts of the other Allies.

'Now, new generations are reinforcing the traditions of friendship and cooperation with those nations who together with us celebrate victory. And I sincerely congratulate the veterans of all countries,' he said.

But in neighboring Belarus, authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko used the day to lash out. 'Today we again see a policy of dictation and aggression by an array of countries and military blocs, interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign states, the dawn of international terrorism. These occurrences unwillingly call to mind associations with the period of the Great Patriotic War,' Lukashenko said, using the Russian and Soviet term for World War Two.

He did not denounce countries by name, but made clear the criticism included Western nations.

'We are seeing the leaders of well-known countries making the decision with insane, terrible ease to bomb peaceful cities, dooming thousands of women and children and the elderly and moreover calling themselves democratic states,' he said after laying a wreath at a war memorial in the capital Minsk.



Parade: There were around 20,000 servicemen taking part in the Red Square commemoration





Show of might: Guns are fired on the embankment of the Moskva river in front of the Kremlin wall (left) while military helicopters fly over Red Square



Salute: The event had a spectacular backdrop of golden domes and Moscow's grandiose buildings



Military hardware: Russian self-propelled artillery drive through Red Square

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Dear autor of the article, I think that the victory in the war is much more important than the "red shoes". Russian people did their best trying to destroy the nazis.

- Ivan, Russia, 10/5/2011 09:54

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I LOVE all this pomp and show, sure the Russians have an agenda with us when they fly planes in or close to our airspace playing cat and mouse. BUT I'd be typing this in German if it wasn't for them.

- Aaron, Weston-super-Mare, 10/5/2011 09:53

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If you got it flaunt it... proud to be Russian

- SL, London, UK, 10/5/2011 08:57

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The parade is Russian tradition, which has always been maintained since 1945, still is being kept up and will always be! It is difficult to explain what it means to all Russian people. It does not demonstrate "look what big guns we have" nor hide anything behind... And yes, I am Russian.

- Timofey, Helsinki, Finland, 10/5/2011 08:50

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I sure hope she's enjoying her new life in the Soviet Union...

- LuLu, Arlington, VA, 10/5/2011 03:57

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Great! an article dedicated to the Russians beating the Nazis with no mention whatsoever of our part in it. Is VE Day not allowed in UK anymore or is it replaced by Europe Day? Shame on you Daily Mail ... along with all the spineless politicians we've got. 66 years ago we were celebrating VE Day ... I know, I was there! Now the country doesn't even mention it let alone celebrate it. Is it because we are now in the EUSSR and dont want to upset the Germans? What a pathetic country we've become.

- Nick Rumble, Hull UK, 10/5/2011 01:59

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