

## Why did Russia attack Poland?

PM Petr Fiala said at a [cabinet press conference](#) after the drone attack by Russia against Poland on early Wed. that it appears that it wasn't a coincidence. "Putin's regime threatens the whole of Europe and is systematically testing how far it can go," Fiala said. The Czech reaction, he said, must be to continue to invest into defense. Anyone who calls into question defense spending, he added, wants a weaker Czech Republic.

Fiala didn't say exactly what he meant by the word "coincidence," but there's one angle to this that he apparently didn't have in mind. The [New York Times](#) wrote shortly before the drone attack occurred that Russia is sending a diplomatic signal with every drone and missile it launches. The article, which appeared online on Sept. 8, quoted Ukrainian and European officials as saying that "Moscow's barrages are often timed for geopolitically significant moments and aimed at symbolic targets."

The goal, the newspaper said, is to strengthen Moscow's hand in peace talks. So far, analysts said, the Kremlin has paid no cost in terms of additional U.S. sanctions as it escalates its attacks. U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said that the U.S. is prepared to increase economic pressure on Russia to get it to negotiate but that European countries also need to apply more force.

The drone strike on Wed. came just hours before EU Commission Pres. Ursula von der Leyen gave her annual [State of the Union address](#) in Strasbourg. In it, she said that the attack was an unprecedented violation of Poland and Europe's air space and that Vladimir Putin's message was clear. "And our response must be clear too," she said. "We need more pressure on Russia to come to the negotiating table. We need more sanctions. We are now working on the 19th package in coordination with partners. We are particularly looking at phasing out Russian fossil fuels faster, the shadow fleet and third countries [that buy Russian oil and gas]." She added that, "This is Russia's war, and it is Russia that should pay." This is why we need to work urgently on a new solution to finance

Ukraine's war effort on the basis of the immobilized Russian assets, she said.

The attack also came just days after a meeting in China of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). [Putin said at the event on Sept. 1](#) that "the pace

of our own payment, settlement and depository infrastructure, and the creation of a bank for joint investment projects. These measures will increase the efficiency of our economic exchanges and protect them from external market fluctuations," he said.

Consider the possibility that Putin, encouraged by the outcome of the SCO meeting, timed the drone attack to correspond with von der Leyen's speech, and that she reacted just as he was hoping she would. She called for putting more pressure on Russia to bring it to the negotiating table. She wants more economic sanctions, including a quicker phase-out of Russian fossil fuels. And she wants new solutions for use

of immobilized Russian assets. She might have called for the same measures even without the drone attack, but there is greater urgency now.

Russia might not have been "testing" to see how far it could go against Europe; it might have been taunting Europe to go even further with its own actions. As the Kremlin sees it, the sanctions hurt the West more than Russia. And Donald Trump, by pressing Europe to invest more into its own defense and to use more force against Russia, could be helping Putin to achieve the global realignment they both seek.

The [Financial Times](#) quoted defense experts and analysts as saying that the drone attack showed "just how unprepared Europe is for the type of mass air assault that Russia inflicts on Ukraine almost every night, laying bare the scale of the investment needed to shore up Nato's eastern flank." By attacking Poland, Russia is virtually assuring that more money will be spent to defend Europe.

The war in Ukraine is now largely a [financial war](#), and the more that countries like the Czech Republic use borrowed money to buy military equipment at inflated prices and, at the same time, cripple their own industries and economies with high energy prices and climate regulations, the closer the conflict comes to a resolution that favors the other side. The drone attack on Poland suggests that the Kremlin thinks that now is the right time to accelerate this process.



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### *The Political Signals Russia Sends With Each Huge Barrage on Ukraine*

Analysts have linked major attacks to important geopolitical events as the Kremlin tries to strengthen its hand in talks.



of cooperation within the SCO is truly impressive." The average GDP of member states rose by more than 5% last year, and national currencies are being used more and more widely in mutual settlements. "We advocate the issuance of joint bonds by the SCO member states, the establish-