

Putin Says Russia Must Undergo a 'Self-Cleansing of Society' to Purge 'Bastards and Traitors'



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks during a meeting on measures of socio-economic support of the regions via videoconference at the Novo-Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow, Russia, March 16, 2022. (Russian Presidential Press Service via AP)

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Russian President Vladimir Putin said in a speech Wednesday that Russia should undergo a "self-cleaning of society" to get rid of the "bastards and traitors" as thousands of Russians try to flee the country amid its invasion into Ukraine.

"The collective West is attempting to splinter our society," Putin [said in a video address shared on Twitter](#). "Speculating on military losses, on socio-economic effects of sanctions, in order to provoke a people's rebellion in Russia."

"But any people, the Russian people especially, are able to distinguish true patriots from bastards and traitors, and will 'spit them out,'" he said of those who do not back the Kremlin.