
Invincible weapon? Russia's advanced HYPERSONIC GLIDER Avangard now in military service

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The advanced Russian nuclear hypersonic glider entered combat service on Friday with the first regiment of Avangard-armed missiles now operational, the defense minister reported.

Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu, who reported the development to President Putin on Friday, said Avangard deployment was *"a signatory event for the country and the armed forces."*

The Russian military armed legacy silo-based UR-100N ICBMs, also known as the Stiletto, with the cutting-edge warheads meant to penetrate heavy anti-ballistic missile defenses.

[Russia's Avangard hypersonic glider final test launch...](#)

The glider is one of several weapons systems meant to boost Russian nuclear deterrence, which were announced by President Vladimir Putin last year. The build-up is meant to counter Washington's development of ABM technologies, which Russia sees as a national threat.

The Russian president believes Russia's nuclear forces need to be strong enough to dissuade any temptation that US military strategists may have to deliver a pre-emptive strike against Russia during a possible crisis. The missile regiment is reportedly deployed in the Orenburg region.

Avangard has reportedly been in development since at least the mid-1980s, with first tests coming sometime around 2004. The specifications and even the appearance of the top-secret weapon remain classified. Russian officials said it can maintain controlled flight through the atmosphere at speeds of up to Mach 20.

Unconfirmed reports claim that the nuclear device it can deliver may be as powerful as 2 megatons, which would be considered overkill for traditional modern nuclear warheads.

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