

## ABSTRACT

In August 1999, Shamil Basayev who had been a key player in the first Russia-Chechnya war mounted a liberation crusade with his compatriot, Khattab, into the neighboring Russian region of Dagestan. The uprising they attempted to stir was unsuccessful, and brought Russian soldiers to the region. Within a few weeks, the uprising was quelled, and the Chechen militias that invaded Dagestan fled back into Chechnya. Russian army general Sergey Kovalev, took advantage of the Dagestan incidents and used it as a pretext to rekindle a new war in Chechnya.

What happened thereafter disclosed that the first Chechen debacle had failed to kindle democratic-oriented reform in Russia. At the height of the raids in Dagestan, Putin was appointed by Yeltsin to be Prime Minister, though the prospect of upcoming presidential elections was an issue, Putin publicly remained committed to the Caucasus. Once Dagestan was purged of Basayev's militias, in August 1999 he declared that the anarchic chaos in Chechnya could no longer be tolerated and sent troops to the Chechen border. Putin is believed to have calculated that a military triumph would boost his own leverage. When, in September of that year, night time explosion of apartment buildings in Moscow and Volgograd killed two hundred sleeping civilians, everything changed; this was the decisive turning point for renewed warfare against Chechnya.

Vladimir Putin also gets an advantage of a new war in Chechnya. Putin's rise to public office coincided with an aggressive resurgence of the war in Chechnya in August 1999. Both in Russia and abroad, Putin's public image was forged by his tough handling of the dare challenge posed by Chechen extremists. On assuming the role of acting President on December 31, 1999, Putin proceeded on a previously scheduled visit to Russian troops in the North Caucasus; carefully orchestrated public relations coverage showed him presenting hunting knives to soldiers. Throughout the winter of 2000, Putin's government regularly claimed that victory was at hand. In recent years, Putin has distanced himself from the management of the continuing conflict. On March 14, 2004, Putin won re-election to the presidency for a second term. As the president for the second term, Putin's policy of Chechnya stays the same.

Chechnya responds with what they call it "protracted war" to put pressure on Moscow. It goes on with suicide bombing like bomb blast that killed the Russian-backed Chechen president, Ahmad Kadyrov. It also goes on with hostage-taking like Beslan Culture Theatre and Beslan tragedy.