

# Russia Is Escalating its “Special Military Operation”. The Appointment of General Gerasimov

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*Former US Marine Corps intelligence officer Scott Ritter has not only warned that Russia is escalating its special military operation in Ukraine, but that this will result in “a slaughter, a massacre” for Ukraine. His statement comes as a lot of speculation is circulating following the appointment of Valery Gerasimov as commander of the overall Ukraine campaign, with the pre-eminent idea being that there was a “reshuffle”.*

Russia’s Defence Ministry announced on January 11 a realignment of the commanders leading the war in Ukraine, with General Valery Gerasimov, chief of the Russian General Staff, becoming the overall commander of the campaign. The former commander, Sergey Surovikin, is now one of his three deputies.

“The time has come where 300,000 reservists have been mobilised, trained, equipped. Russia is getting ready to change the nature of the conflict,” [said Scott Ritter](#), a former US Marine Corps intelligence officer who served in the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Storm and in Iraq overseeing the disarmament of WMD’s.

Ritter said how the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation are evidently preparing to expand the special military operation in Ukraine to a full war effort. From his experience, there has not been a great Russian failure, as Western media would have you believe, and rather, placing Gerasimov in his position is an indication that the military operation in Ukraine will expand.

The former intelligence officer believes that Russia will complete its demilitarisation and deNazification of Ukraine in 2023. Gerasimov having greater responsibilities is an indication of this.

“When Russia finishes this current military campaign, I believe the Ukrainian Army will be physically destroyed,” he said. “Tragically this means that tens of thousands, if not

hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers are going to lose their lives. This is going to be a slaughter, a massacre, but they opted for this so they pay the price.”

He also warned that there will likely be a “dedicated Strategic Air Campaign” with the aim of destroying Ukraine so-much-so that “there will be no viable functioning nation.” Ritter explained that this will force the final collapse of the Zelensky regime and allow a new government to come to power and accept surrender.

However, for the next phase of the expanded campaign to be a success, someone of Gerasimov’s experience is most suitable as he will contribute to improving the effectiveness of decision-making and coordinating the actions of the Russian armed forces in the combat zone and their provision of equipment.

Although Russia already had a commander, his authority did not cover the full range of tasks necessary for the military operation to be successful. With Russia evidently preparing for a major offensive, many issues need to be resolved, and quickly, such as the effective supply of arms and equipment to troops, the evacuation of the wounded, and others.

It is recalled that the commander of the Air Force, Army General Sergey Surovikin, who was appointed as the commander of the Ukraine military operation in October 2022, was only responsible for the units that were directly on the front lines of the fighting. However, some military units involved in combat operations, mainly aviation and the Navy, were located outside the area of the operation, which caused some problems in coordinating decisions and synchronising actions.

Now, Gerasimov will be on the ground among his soldiers on the front line. In modern warfare, the physical presence of the highest-ranking military office on the battlefield is exceptional, especially given the hybrid nature of modern conflicts which empowers advanced technology. None-the-less, technology cannot completely replace troops on the ground, and the presence of Gerasimov will surely be a massive morale boost.

As Gerasimov will have more leverage to ensure a better coordination of Russian air, land and naval forces against the Ukrainian military, it can be safely assumed that there will be an intensification of the conflict, likely in the springtime. This also aligns with Ritter’s belief that the total destruction of the Ukrainian state is an inevitable eventuality in 2023.

It is for this reason that only weeks before the first anniversary of the military operation, the West is scrambling to send a flurry of offensive armoured vehicles and other equipment to the Ukrainian military, even though there were initial fears on how Russia would react. Unfortunately for the West though, the war in Ukraine has reached a phase where all new equipment is quickly being turned into scrap metal.

Now, the current situation is about to become even more difficult for Ukraine with the reassignment of Valery Gerasimov.

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