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Putin Says Trump Is Not His Wife

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Actors in prosthetic make-up portraying Presidents Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump **TaylorHerring / Flickr**

President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday it would be misplaced to talk of "disappointment" in the context of U.S. President Donald Trump, because the two leaders are not married.

"Your question sounds very naive," Putin said in response to a reporter's question asking whether he was "disappointed" with the U.S. president. "He is not my future wife, neither am I his bride or groom."

"Each side has its own interest," he added, speaking on the last day of the BRICS summit in China.

Putin left a reporter's question on whether he thinks Trump faces impeachment, unanswered. The question followed comments from Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on a Sunday talk show that "it could be worth remembering" that "not all American presidents have reached the end of their term."

The comment marks a significant departure from the positive tone struck by Russian state media and officials leading up to Trump's election last November.

Earlier in the question and answer session in Xiamen, Putin hinted that Russia could impose additional U.S. diplomatic staff cuts after the closure of its San Francisco consulate last week. Moscow already instructed American missions to bring down personnel numbers to the same level as Russian diplomats in the U.S. by Sept. 1.

The White House revealed last week that Trump, facing Russia's Sept. 1 deadline, personally ordered the closure of the Russian consulate in San Francisco and annexes in Washington D.C. and New York.

Calling the confiscation "unprecedented" and "a violation of Russia's property rights," Putin said Tuesday that he would instruct his Foreign Ministry to take the matter to court.

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