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Kremlin Defends Putin's Bouquet for Merkel Against Allegations of Sexism

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The Kremlin has come to the defense of President Vladimir Putin's decision to give flowers to German Chancellor Angela Merkel as a Russian tradition.

Germany's Bild tabloid criticized Putin's decision to give a bouquet to Merkel when they met in Russia's Sochi last week as a sexist "affront" to remind the German leader that she is a woman. The two leaders met to discuss issues including the Nordstream 2 gas pipeline project and the Iranian nuclear deal.

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"For us, it's more of a sign of good manners. These are our traditions and we're adhering to them," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told the Govorit Moskva radio station Monday when asked about the flowers.

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