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Trump Puts G7 Summit Proposal to Putin

Russian President Vladimir Putin could be invited to an expanded G7 meeting later this year.

By AFP

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Vladimir Putin could be invited to an expanded G7 meeting alongside the leaders of Australia, India and South Korea. **Kremlin.ru**

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday proposed his plan to include Russia in an expanded G7 summit in a phone call with President Vladimir Putin, the Kremlin said.

It said Trump "informed" Putin of his plan to hold a rescheduled G7 "with possible invitation

of the leaders of Russia, Australia, India and South Korea," without making further comment.

The Kremlin called the conversation as a whole "constructive, business-like and substantive."

The U.S. leader said Saturday he would delay the G7 summit and hold an expanded event later, possibly in September, calling the current lineup of countries "very outdated."

The meeting was due to take place via video conference in June but Trump said he would delay it and aim to hold the gathering in-person instead.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov had told journalists earlier Monday that "we don't know the details of the proposal" and said Putin required "more information which we do not yet have."

Trump said Saturday to journalists on Air Force One that he had "roughly" broached the topic with leaders of the four other countries.

Russia was thrown out of what was then the G8 in 2014 after it seized Ukraine's Black Sea peninsula of Crimea, an annexation never recognized by the international community.

The G7 major advanced countries — Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States — hold annual meetings to discuss international economic coordination.

Trump has previously said he supports returning Russia to the G7.

On Monday, the Russian leader also congratulated Trump on Saturday's successful launch of the SpaceX spacecraft taking astronauts to the International Space Station, the Kremlin said.

The leaders "confirmed a mutual intention to develop mutually beneficial cooperation in the space sphere," it added.

The Kremlin press service said the call noted "the importance of stepping up Russian-U.S. dialogue in the sphere of strategic stability and confidence-building measures in the military sphere."

Putin also thanked the U.S. for sending ventilators to help coronavirus patients.

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