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Gorbachev Urges Better U.S.-Russian Ties Under Biden

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Mikhail Gorbachev **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

Russia needs to improve its ties with the United States under Joe Biden, though "not at any cost," the last Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev said after major U.S. television networks called the race for the Democratic Party challenger.

Gorbachev said Biden appeared to "understand the importance of relations with Russia" when he last met the former U.S. vice president at the White House in 2009.

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"The conversation was detailed and friendly," Gorbachev, 89, told the state-run TASS news agency Sunday.

Biden, 77, had coined the phrase "press the reset button" in former U.S. President Barack Obama's unsuccessful attempt to mend ties with Russia. Relations worsened over NATO's

expansion into Eastern Europe and the 2008 Russian-Georgian war, then sunk deeper after Russia annexed Crimea and incurred Western sanctions in 2014.

“I hope that Joe Biden will seek to normalize relations and restore trust between our countries. It’s in the interests of both America and Russia,” Gorbachev told TASS, describing the president-elect as “a well-known person with extensive experience in both domestic and foreign politics.”

“I’m sure that Russia also needs good relations with the U.S., although of course not at any cost,” he added.

Gorbachev also expressed confidence to the state-run RIA Novosti news agency that Russia is “ready for serious dialogue” toward restoring trust between the nuclear powers.

U.S. television networks declared Biden president-elect Saturday after concluding that the still-ongoing vote count gave him an insurmountable lead over incumbent Donald Trump.

Trump has not conceded the election and vowed to press on with court challenges, which analysts say have little chance of overturning the results of the Nov. 3 vote.

Though many world leaders have rushed to congratulate President-elect Biden, the Kremlin cited those challenges as the reason why President Vladimir Putin had yet to send Biden a congratulatory note.

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