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Putin-Biden Summit Set for June 16 in Geneva

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The White House said a date and location for the summit will be announced later. **AP / TASS**

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his U.S. counterpart Joe Biden will hold their first summit in Geneva on June 16, the Kremlin and the White House said Tuesday.

The Kremlin said in a statement that Putin and Biden will discuss "the current state and prospects for further development of Russian-American relations, issues of strategic stability" in addition to cooperation in the fight against coronavirus and regional conflicts.

A White House readout said the leaders plan to address a "full range of pressing issues, as we seek to restore predictability and stability to the U.S.-Russia relationship."

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The back-to-back announcements follow meetings between the countries' top diplomats and security chiefs in preparation for the summit in recent weeks.

The Putin-Biden summit sets the stage for a new chapter in the fraught U.S.-Russian relationship.

Since taking over the White House in January, Biden has taken a firm line against Russia — going as far as describing Putin as a "killer" — in sharp contrast to his predecessor, Donald Trump, who was accused of complacency toward the Russian leader. Biden previously met Putin in his capacity as vice president in 2011.

There were some signs of thawing relations before the meeting when the White House announced it would not sanction the main company involved in the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project between Russia and Germany and its managing director.

The Biden administration still imposed sanctions against some entities, but it wants to avoid antagonizing Berlin and in doing so has cleared a major obstacle for the pipeline to go ahead.

AFP contributed reporting.

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