

CIA Head Meets Russian Security Council Chief in Moscow

By [AFP](#)

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Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev. **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

U.S. Central Intelligence Agency director William Burns met the head of Russia's powerful Security Council for talks in Moscow on Tuesday, the council's press service said.

Burns and Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev discussed "Russian-American relations," it said in a terse statement.

Burns' visit to Moscow was not previously announced and the Security Council released no further details.

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A U.S. Embassy spokesperson told AFP that Burns' visit came at the request of President Joe Biden and that the director was leading a delegation of senior officials for meetings over two

days.

"They are meeting with members of the Russian government to discuss a range of issues in the bilateral relationship," the spokesperson said.

The meeting comes as Russia's ties with the West are at their lowest levels in years, strained by a wide range of disagreements.

Western nations have imposed a series of sanctions on Russia over its 2014 annexation of Crimea, alleged election interference, cyberattacks and the poisoning of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

But U.S. officials have said they are looking for cooperation with Moscow on specific issues, including strategic arms reductions, the Iran nuclear talks and cracking down on ransomware and other cyberattacks.

U.S. President Joe Biden and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin met for their first summit in June and agreed to keep communications channels open.

Russia's Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov in an address Tuesday described that summit as "fruitful."

"Over the past year, there have been some small, but still positive developments in bilateral relations," Antonov said, citing climate and arms control.

Russian and U.S. diplomats have since that meeting held closed-door talks in Geneva on arms control and the State Department's Under Secretary for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland was in Moscow for talks last month.

Burns, a veteran diplomat who was the U.S. ambassador to Russia in 2005–2008, became CIA director in March.

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