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Kremlin Blasts 'Divisive' U.S. Democracy Summit Snub

November 24, 2021



The White House

The Kremlin said Wednesday it opposes U.S. President Joe Biden's "divisive" democracy summit after Russia did not appear on the list of invitees.

Around 110 countries have been invited to the virtual summit, including the United States' major Western allies, and snubbing Russia and China. The long-advertised meeting will take place online on Dec. 9 and 10 ahead of an in-person meeting at its second gathering next year.

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the guest list, released Tuesday on the State Department website, showed that Washington "prefers to create new dividing lines, to divide countries into those that — in their opinion — are good, and those that are bad."

"More and more countries prefer to decide themselves how to live," Peskov told reporters,

adding that Washington is "trying to privatize the term 'democracy'."

The list of invitees from the former Soviet world includes Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia and Georgia as well as the three Baltic states that are now members of the European Union and NATO.

Biden, who has made the struggle between democracies and "autocratic governments" a focal point of his foreign policy, pledged to hold the global conference during the 2020 presidential campaign.

Russia's snub comes amid tensions on multiple fronts between the two nuclear powers, with Washington blaming Moscow for a wave of cyberattacks, diplomat expulsions and election meddling. Moscow in turn labeled the U.S. an "unfriendly country" this spring, a move which Washington says forced it to halt all consular services within Russia.

AFP contributed reporting.

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