The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# France Sees 'Diplomatic Hope' to Resolve Ukraine Crisis

By AFP

February 21, 2022



**kremlin.ru**

France said Monday that it sees a chance to resolve the crisis between Russia and Ukraine over Moscow's troop build-up after Paris proposed a summit meeting between U.S. President Joe Biden and Russia's Vladimir Putin.

"There is a diplomatic hope that was revived by the president" with the summit proposal, France's Europe Minister Clement Beaune told LCI TV, after the offer brokered by President Emmanuel Macron.

"If there is still a chance to avoid war, to avoid a confrontation and build a political and diplomatic solution, then we need to take it," he said.

The White House said Biden had in principle agreed to a meeting with Putin, so long as Moscow does not invade Ukraine, following talks Macron held with both leaders on Sunday.

According to the Elysee, both leaders accepted the summit proposal, with preparations due to be carried out by the top Russian and U.S. diplomats on Thursday.

The French presidency also emphasized that such a meeting could be held only "on the condition that Russia does not invade Ukraine."

But the Kremlin on Monday said it was "premature" to organize a U.S.-Moscow summit for the time being.

The meeting proposal was raised after Macron held two telephone conversations with Putin on Sunday alone.

The possible summit is a sign that "a political solution could be possible," Beaune said. He said that the summit should take place "as soon as possible" but no date had been fixed.

Beaune also appeared to rule out major concessions to Russia such as over the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea annexed by Moscow in 2014 or over Kremlin demands that Ukraine should never join NATO.

He said: "We do not have the attitude of making unacceptable concessions... It cannot be Russia who decides unilaterally who goes into which alliance and over the borders that were recognised and stabilized 30 years ago."

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/02/21/france-sees-diplomatic-hope-to-resolve-ukraine-crisis-a76484