The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# Berlusconi 'Saddened' by Friend Putin's Behavior

By AFP

April 09, 2022



Vladimir Putin and Silvio Berlusconi (left to right) during a walk along the Yalta embankment, Crimea in September 2015. **Mikhail Metzel/TASS**

Former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi said Saturday that he was "deeply disappointed and saddened" by the behavior of his old friend Russian President Vladimir Putin over the Ukraine invasion.

"I cannot and I do not want to hide that I am deeply disappointed by the behavior of Vladimir Putin," Berlusconi told a public meeting of his right-wing Forza Italia party in Rome, which is part of the broad coalition supporting the government led by Mario Draghi.

**Related article**: Russian Abuses Complicate US Balancing Act on Ukraine

"I've known him about twenty years ago and he always seemed to me to be a democrat and a

man of peace," the 85-year-old billionaire continued.

Berlusconi, who served as head of the Italian government three times between 1994 and 2011, had previously refrained from publicly criticizing Putin.

When he was in power, Berlusconi maintained friendly personal ties with the Russian president, going so far as to invite him on vacation to his luxurious villa in Sardinia.

"Faced with the horror of the massacres of civilians in Bucha and other places, real war crimes, Russia can not deny its responsibilities," he said Saturday.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/04/09/berlusconi-saddened-by-friend-putins-behavior-a77293