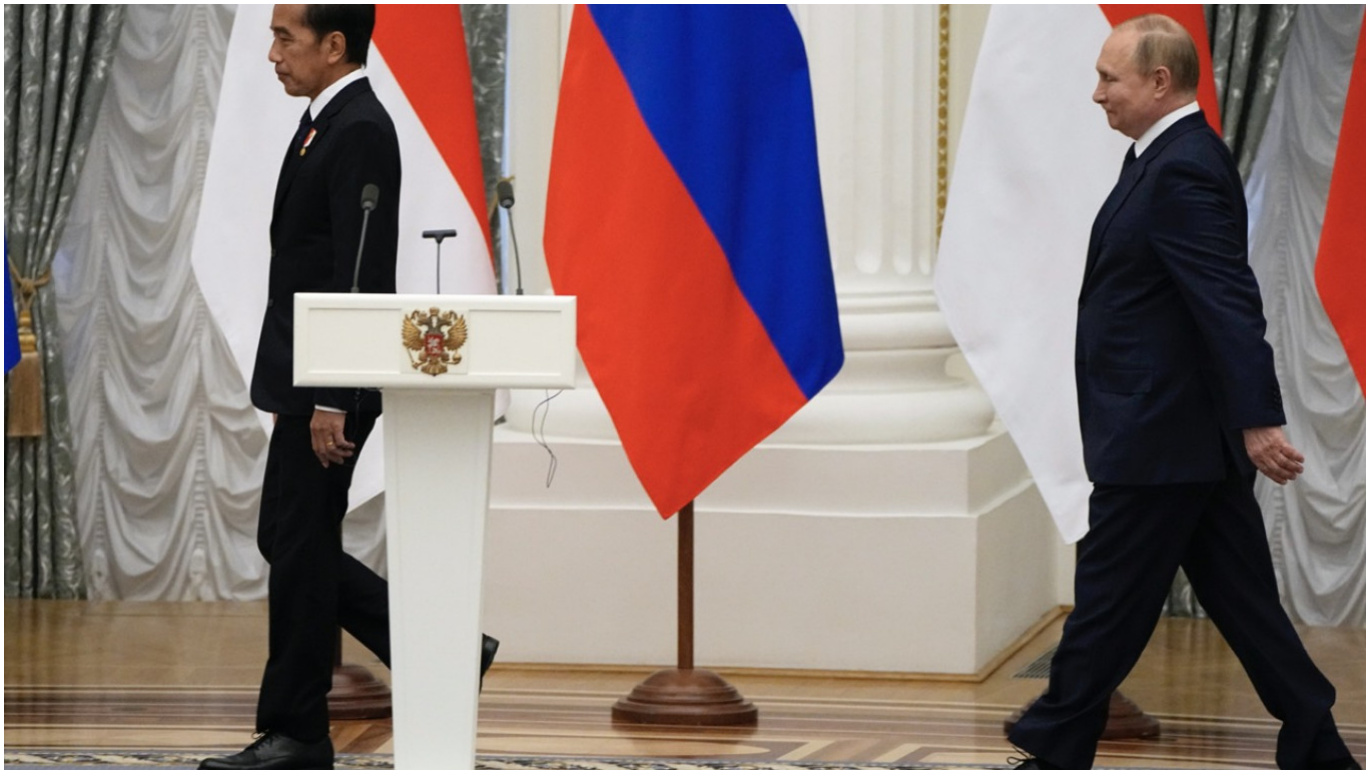
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Putin to Attend G20 Summit, Indonesian President Says

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Russian President Vladimir Putin (R) and Indonesian President Joko Widodo enter a hall to attend a joint news conference after their meeting in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, 30 June 2022. **EPA/ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO/AP POOL / POOL/TASS**

Russian President Vladimir Putin plans to attend the Group of 20 summit in Bali this November, Indonesian President Joko Widodo confirmed for the first time Thursday.

"[Chinese leader] Xi Jinping will come. President Putin has also told me he will come," Widodo told Bloomberg following phone talks with the Russian leader.

The Kremlin said earlier Thursday that Putin and Widodo discussed preparations for the G20 summit, though it did not mention whether Putin would attend.

The Kremlin declined to comment on the Indonesian president's announcement to Bloomberg, but the news agency said an unnamed official familiar with the situation confirmed Putin's plans to attend the summit in person.

If confirmed, it would be one of Putin's first face-to-face meetings with Western leaders since he ordered a full-scale attack on neighboring Ukraine in February.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's adviser said earlier this month that the war-torn country's leader would also attend the G20 summit if Putin were in attendance.

Western governments have sought to isolate Russia with crippling economic sanctions over its invasion of Ukraine. Only half of G20 members has joined the international sanctions, Bloomberg reported earlier in August.

The United States had sought to remove Russia from the G20 and pressured Indonesia to exclude Putin from the summit.

Putin has meanwhile claimed "it's simply impossible" to isolate Russia from the rest of the world.

Putin hosted Widodo at the Kremlin on June 30, days after the Kremlin announced that it had "responded positively" to the invitation to the G20 summit under Indonesia's presidency of a forum of the world's largest economies.

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