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Russia Approves New U.S. Ambassador with Relations at Historic Low

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U.S. President Joe Biden this week nominated Lynne Tracy as Washington's next ambassador to Russia. **mil.am**

Moscow has agreed to receive a new U.S. ambassador at the most challenging period in U.S.-Russian relations in recent history, a senior Russian diplomat said Thursday.

U.S. President Joe Biden this week nominated Lynne Tracy, a career diplomat with extensive experience in Moscow and the post-Soviet region, as his next ambassador to Russia.

Tracy, who speaks Russian and currently serves as U.S. Ambassador to Armenia, will replace outgoing Ambassador John Sullivan, who left Moscow at the end of his tenure earlier in September.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told reporters that Moscow has granted formal agreement to Tracy's appointment, according to the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

Tracy will be the first woman to lead the U.S. mission in Russia if the U.S. Senate confirms her nomination.

Once she assumes her role she will be tasked with navigating tense U.S.-Russian ties, with President Vladimir Putin threatening nuclear attacks on the West as his troops face heavy losses nearly seven months after invading Ukraine.

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The United States and its European allies have imposed unprecedented sanctions on Russia and supplied Ukraine with billions of U.S. dollars' worth of weapons and supplies in the wake of Russia's invasion of its pro-Western neighbor.

The Kremlin decried the poor state of bilateral relations this summer, with Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov saying "there's no U.S.-Russian dialogue as such."

"Relations are now virtually at zero. We're now at a very, very hot point of confrontation," Peskov told reporters in June.

On Thursday, Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov told reporters "there's no sign of improvement," according to RIA Novosti.

Elizabeth Rood, deputy chief of mission in Moscow, has managed the embassy since Sullivan's abrupt departure, which he had reportedly attributed to the sudden death of his wife from cancer earlier this month.

Tracy was the second-ranking official at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow from 2014-17.

Prior to her posts in Russia and Armenia, Tracy worked at U.S. diplomatic missions in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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