

Kremlin Sees 'No Hope' of Improving Ties With Britain as Sunak Becomes PM

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Rishi Sunak. **HM Treasury** / flickr

Updated on Oct. 26 to add that Putin did not congratulate Sunak on his premiership.

The Kremlin said Tuesday that Moscow sees "no hope" of improving diplomatic ties with London under new British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

"At the moment, we do not see any preconditions, grounds, or hope that in the foreseeable future there will be any positive changes" in the relationship between the United Kingdom and Russia, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said during his daily briefing.

"Russia maintains its openness and readiness to discuss the most difficult issues at the negotiating table. But not to the detriment of its own interests," Peskov added.

President Vladimir Putin did not send a note of congratulations to Sunak as is customary, Peskov [said](#) Wednesday, as Russia classifies Britain as an "unfriendly" country.

"The UK is now in the category of 'unfriendly' countries. Therefore, no, a telegram was not

sent," Peskov said.

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Sunak on Tuesday became the third British prime minister this year following the resignation of Boris Johnson in July and of Liz Truss earlier this month.

Relations between Russia and Britain, already strained due to a litany of issues, have deteriorated even further since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24.

London has been a key ally of Kyiv in the eight-month war, committing 2.3 billion pounds (\$2.6 billion) of military aid in 2022.

This summer, Sunak vowed to "redouble our efforts and reinforce our policy of total support for Ukraine that Boris has so ably led" if he were to become prime minister.

Speaking outside 10 Downing Street on Tuesday, Sunak called the conflict a "terrible war that must be seen successfully to its conclusion."

Following Truss's resignation, Moscow said that it was not expecting any "political wisdom" from the United Kingdom or any of its Western allies.

"We cannot expect any insights or political wisdom from anyone in the West now... especially from Great Britain, where the current head of the executive is not elected by the people," Peskov said at the time.

AFP contributed reporting.

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