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Kremlin Turns Down Biden's Conditions for Putin Talks

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Putin and his spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Valery Sharifulin / TASS**

The Kremlin on Friday rejected U.S. President Joe Biden's conditions that Russian troops fully withdraw from Ukraine before he speak with President Vladimir Putin.

In the strongest suggestion so far that he would be prepared to sit down with Putin, Biden said late Thursday he would be willing to speak to the Russian leader for the first time since the Ukraine invasion if he truly wants to end the war.

"There's one way for this war to end — the rational way. Putin to pull out of Ukraine, number one. But it appears he's not," Biden said.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Friday that the Kremlin is not ready to give up the captured Ukrainian territories but remains open for talks "to achieve our goals."

Embed:

> “The idea that Putin is ever going to defeat Ukraine is beyond comprehension."
>
> Biden said he’d be interested in talking to Putin only if the Russian president is really looking for a way to end the war https://t.co/cpKxHKIwSt pic.twitter.com/jlUDy26XUU
>
> — Bloomberg Quicktake (@Quicktake) December 2, 2022

“The United States still doesn’t recognize the new territories as part of the Russian Federation,” Peskov said.

“This of course significantly complicates the search for some kind of mutual grounds for possible discussions,” he said.

Biden said he would be “happy to sit down with Putin to see what he has in mind” after consulting with his NATO allies.

"I'm prepared to speak with Mr. Putin if in fact there is an interest in him deciding he's looking for a way to end the war," he said at a joint news conference with French President Emmanuel Macron.

“He hasn't done that yet.”

Macron has said he will speak again to Putin after his trip to Washington and has warned against cutting off the Russian leader.

Biden and Macron both vowed long-term support to Ukraine in its fight against Russian invaders.

AFP contributed reporting.

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