

# Xi and Putin Reject U.S. 'Interference,' Hail Ties

By [AFP](#)

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Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin. **Grigory Sysoyev, RIA Novosti / kremlin.ru**

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin accused the United States of "interfering" in their countries' domestic affairs during a telephone call on Thursday, the Kremlin said.

Xi and Putin denounced the "U.S. policy of interfering in the internal affairs of other states" during an hour-long call.

"The leaders of the two countries realize that the U.S. is practically implementing a policy of double containment, [toward] both Russia and China," Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said.

Moscow has looked to Beijing as a crucial economic lifeline since the West hit Russia with unprecedented sanctions over its invasion of Ukraine.

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Beijing, meanwhile, has benefited from cheap Russian energy imports and access to vast natural resources, including steady gas shipments via the Power of Siberia pipeline.

Trade between the two countries has surged in the last two years, hitting \$240.1 billion in 2023, or a 26% annual increase, according to Chinese customs data.

Xi said the two "should closely collaborate strategically, defend the sovereignty, security and development interests of their respective countries, and resolutely oppose interference in internal affairs by external forces," according to a readout from Chinese state broadcaster CCTV.

The Chinese leader also wished Putin well in his coming presidential election, according to the Kremlin.

"Xi said he knows that Russia is now in the midst of an election campaign and wished the upcoming elections in March to be successful," Ushakov said.

Putin, who has faced isolation from most Western countries over the conflict in Ukraine, met with Xi in a rare trip abroad to Beijing in October.

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