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Putin Congratulates Iran's New President, Hopes for Closer Ties

By AFP

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Masoud Pezeshkian during voting in Iranian presidential election. **EPA / TASS**

Russian leader Vladimir Putin congratulated Iran's reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian on his victory in a presidential runoff, the Kremlin said on Saturday.

"I hope that your tenure as president will contribute to a reinforcement of constructive bilateral cooperation between our friendly peoples," Putin said in a message to Pezeshkian.

The two countries, the target of stiff Western sanctions, can "coordinate efforts to resolve international issues in a constructive manner," he said.

Pezeshkian received more than 16 million votes, around 54%, while his rival, ultraconservative Saeed Jalili, took more than 13 million, roughly 44%, out of about 30 million votes cast in the second round.

An election was not due until 2025 but was called early after the death of ultraconservative president Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash.

Four candidates ran in the first round held on June 28.

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