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Kremlin Says Watching U.S. Election After Biden's Exit, But Focused on Ukraine War

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Alexei Danichev, RIA Novosti / kremlin.ru**

Updated with Peskov's comments on Monday.

The Kremlin said late Sunday that it would continue to follow the 2024 U.S. presidential election after President Joe Biden made a surprise announcement to withdraw from the race, but otherwise stressed that Moscow's main priority is progress in its ongoing war against Ukraine.

"The [U.S.] election is still four months away. And that's a long time, during which a lot can change. We need to focus our attention, follow what happens next," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told the Telegram news channel Shot.

"The priority for us is the special military operation, not the election results in the United States," Peskov added, using the Kremlin's preferred term for the full-scale invasion of

Ukraine. He later told reporters on Monday that Moscow was "not surprised" by Biden's announcement to pull out of the race.

Biden on Sunday endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic Party's new nominee ahead of the November election. The Biden-Harris administration has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine since Russia launched its invasion in February 2022.

When asked on Monday how a potential Harris presidency might impact relations with Moscow, Peskov said: "So far, we have not noticed her contribution to our bilateral relations. There were some statements [made by Harris] that were full of unfriendly rhetoric toward our country."

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Shortly after Biden announced he was withdrawing his candidacy, Russia's Foreign Ministry accused U.S. media and political leaders of "colluding" to "hide the true state of affairs regarding Biden's mental health."

"Since everyone pays lip service to the very 'American democracy,' freedom of speech and transparency, then I think they should raise the issue of investigating what I call the collusion of the American media with political circles, including officials and the so-called expert community," spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

"It's time to highlight all these statements and actions of the manipulation machine, their propaganda of lies," Zakharova wrote on Telegram.

Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev also weighed in on Biden dropping out of the U.S. presidential race, writing on X (formerly Twitter) that "It's over for Biden."

"We wish him health. The special military operation's goals will be achieved," Medvedev wrote.

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