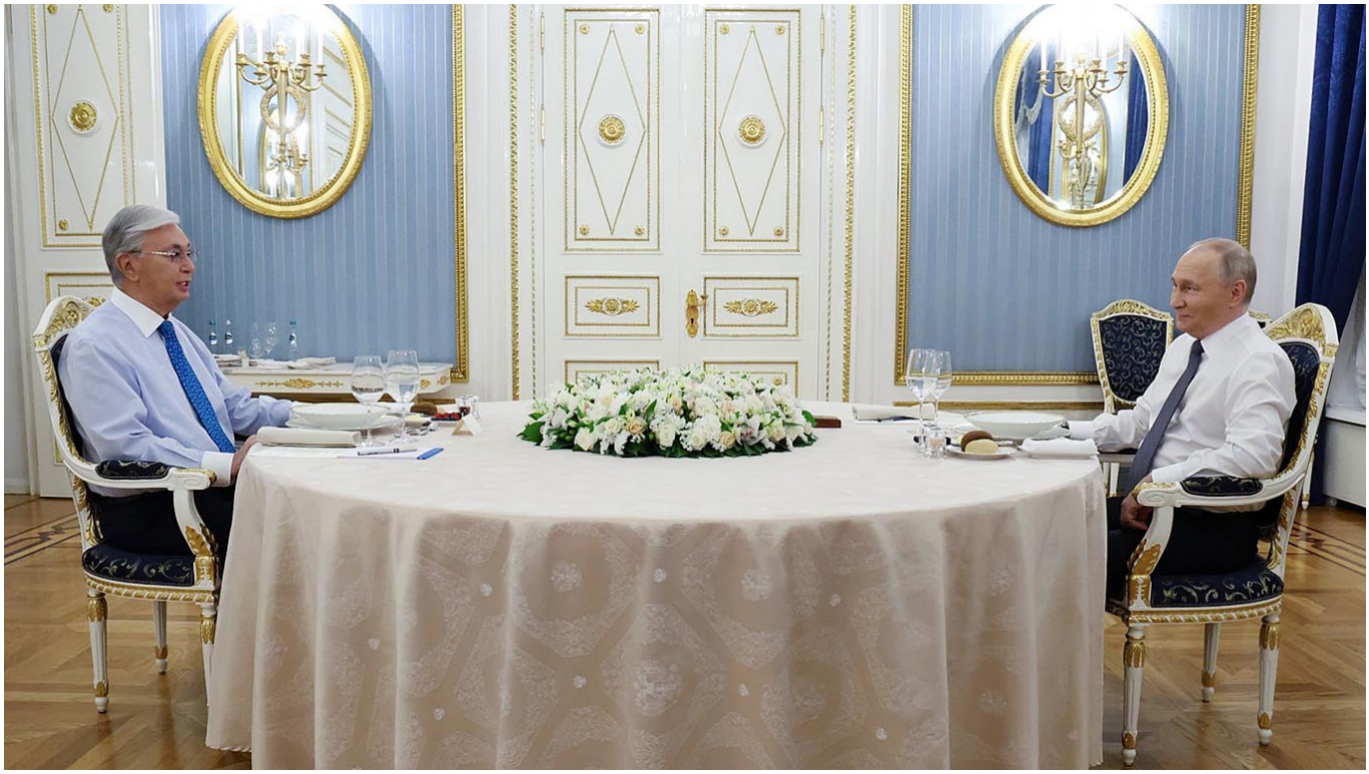
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Putin Accepts Invitation to Visit Kazakhstan in 2026

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Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Vladimir Putin. **kremlin.ru**

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday accepted an invitation from Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to visit the neighboring Central Asian country next year.

"Thank you. I will gladly come to Kazakhstan," Putin told Tokayev in comments broadcast by state media.

That would mark Putin's fifth visit to Kazakhstan since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. A date for the trip has not been publicly announced.

Located between Russia to the north and China to the east, Kazakhstan has sought to maintain a careful diplomatic balance over the war in Ukraine.

Last Thursday, Tokayev and the four other Central Asian presidents met with U.S. President Donald Trump in Washington. Trump named critical minerals a key item on that summit's agenda, while Tokayev hailed the "beginning of a new era of interaction between the United

States and Central Asia."

The Kremlin said Putin was "extremely interested" in hearing Tokayev's briefing on those talks in Washington during his visit to Moscow this week.

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the Russian and Kazakh leaders planned to discuss joint projects and the impact of U.S. sanctions on Russian oil majors Lukoil and Rosneft, both of which have significant holdings in Kazakhstan.

At the Kremlin on Wednesday, Tokayev and Putin pledged to continue signing and implementing agreements that advance the two countries' strategic partnership and economic cooperation, with bilateral trade reaching nearly $30 billion in 2024.

Putin underscored that Tokayev's visit elevated bilateral relations to a "higher intergovernmental level."

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