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Russia Says It Remains in 'Constant Contact' With Iran as Strikes Continue

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People lay flowers at the Iranian Embassy in Moscow. **Yaroslav Chingaev / Moskva News Agency**

The Kremlin said Monday that it remains in close communication with authorities in Tehran amid escalating attacks by the United States and Israel that have killed dozens of senior Iranian officials, including the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"We are in constant contact with the leadership of Iran and are discussing the situation surrounding that country," President Vladimir Putin's top spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters at a briefing.

Putin on Sunday extended his condolences to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian over what he called a "cynical assassination" of Khamenei a day earlier. Iran named Ayatollah Alireza Arafi to serve on a temporary leadership council alongside Pezeshkian as the country's next supreme leader is selected.

Peskov said the Kremlin continues to engage with regional leaders amid the conflict, which broke out early Saturday after the United States and Israel carried out attacks on Iran. Putin

later in the day held phone calls with the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and the UAE.

Peskov expressed "deep disappointment" that Oman-brokered negotiations with U.S. and Iranian officials over Tehran's nuclear program once again "deteriorated to the point of outright aggression" despite reports of progress having been made between the two countries.

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At the same time, Peskov said that Moscow remains interested in the Trump administration's ongoing attempts to negotiate an end to the war in Ukraine. White House special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner have served as key negotiators in both Ukraine and Iran talks.

"It's in our interests to continue these negotiations, and we will certainly remain open to them," Peskov said. "We greatly appreciate the mediation efforts of the United States."

His comments come after Kremlin sources told Bloomberg this weekend that officials in Moscow may soon walk away from U.S.-brokered peace talks if Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky continues to refuse to cede territory in the eastern Donbas region.

Another round of negotiations is expected to take place early this month, Zelensky has said.

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