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Putin and Iran's Pezeshkian Hold Phone Call as Middle East War Escalates

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Vladimir Putin and Masoud Pezeshkian meet in Turkmenistan in December 2025. **Kristina Kormilitsyna / TASS**

President Vladimir Putin held a phone call with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, the Kremlin said late Friday, as the United States and Israel continued to escalate their attacks against Iran.

Putin expressed "deep condolences" over the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, members of his family and other senior political and military officials, as well as civilian casualties that he blamed on the Israeli and American militaries.

The Kremlin said Putin reaffirmed Russia's position that hostilities must stop immediately and that disputes surrounding Iran and the wider Middle East should be resolved through diplomatic means rather than military force.

Putin also said he remains in contact with leaders of countries belonging to the Gulf

Cooperation Council as the crisis unfolds.

Pezeshkian thanked Russia for what he described as solidarity with the Iranian people and briefed Putin on developments in the current phase of the conflict, according to the Kremlin readout.

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Russia is one of Iran's closest partners. This week, it condemned U.S.-Israeli attacks on the Islamic republic as an "unprovoked act of armed aggression."

In 2025, the two countries signed a strategic partnership agreement that includes provisions for countering shared threats. However, the pact stops short of mutual defense obligations, unlike the security agreement Russia has signed with North Korea.

Some analysts say Russia's response to the ongoing U.S.-Israeli attacks is likely to be limited largely to statements in international forums such as the UN Security Council.

However, sources told The Washington Post on Friday that Russia is providing Iran with intelligence to help it strike American military forces in the Middle East, even as the Kremlin publicly states that officials in Tehran have not asked for any support.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said this week that "military cooperation between Iran and Russia is no secret" and that "this cooperation continues."

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Friday that the Pentagon is "not concerned" about the reported information sharing between Russia and Iran.

Donald Trump scolded Fox News correspondent Peter Doocy on Friday for asking what he called a "stupid question" when he asked the U.S. president about the reports of Russia helping Iran target American military assets.

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