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Putin and Xi Sign 'Multipolar World' Declaration in Beijing

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President Vladimir Putin and Chinese Leader Xi Jinping signed a joint declaration on Wednesday focused on building a "multipolar world," sending a defiant signal to the U.S. just days after President Donald Trump concluded a visit to Beijing without any major deals.

The declaration was among 20 agreements signed in the presence of both leaders at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, with an additional 20 documents expected to be announced separately.

"We'll expand our bilateral cooperation and actively engage in international forums where our teams are working closely together to build a strong foundation for a multipolar world," Putin said during the talks.

Xi held up Russian-Chinese relations as a "model" for relations between two major powers. In a veiled swipe at the United States, Xi warned of "unilateral and hegemonic countercurrents running rampant."

His remarks come just a week after Trump paid a three-day visit to Beijing. Despite promising sweeping trade deals ahead of that trip, Trump departed China without having made substantive announcements alongside Xi.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Wednesday downplayed comparisons between the visits, saying it "makes more sense to compare the substance... [rather than] the ceremonial trappings" of Putin and Trump's trips.

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During the summit, Putin and Xi extended the Russian-Chinese Treaty of Good-Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation, which was originally signed in July 2001.

They also signed a joint statement on "further strengthening" the comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation between the two nations, building on a strategic partnership of coordination first established in 1996.

"Russia and China are committed to an independent and sovereign foreign policy, are working together in close strategic cooperation and playing an important stabilizing role on the global stage," Putin said.

Despite projecting a united front to the West, both sides failed to agree on a concrete timeline for the Power of Siberia 2 gas pipeline. The lack of a firm launch date comes after aides confirmed Putin intended to make a renewed push to convince Xi to finally lock in the deal.

"In general, there is an understanding of the main parameters for Power of Siberia 2. There is agreement on the route and the construction process," Peskov told reporters on Wednesday.

"A few nuances remain to be finalized, but the overall understanding is already there," he said.

The proposed route through Mongolia would transport 50 billion cubic meters of Russian natural gas annually from the Yamal Peninsula to northern China.

In September, Russia and China signed a "legally binding" memorandum to advance the project, which has been stalled for years due to price disagreements.

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Relations between Russia and China have deepened since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, with Putin visiting Beijing every year since then as his country faces diplomatic isolation from Western powers.

While Beijing has regularly called for talks to end the war in Ukraine, it has never explicitly condemned Russia for sending troops into its neighbor, presenting itself instead as a neutral party.

The summit comes as Xi plays host to a number of world leaders seeking to shore up alliances

with China amid an increasingly unpredictable United States under Trump — a trend further exacerbated by the Iran war.

Addressing that conflict, Xi underlined in his talks with Putin that further hostilities in the Middle East are "inadvisable," adding that a "comprehensive ceasefire is of utmost urgency."

AFP contributed reporting.

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