

British PM Falsely Claims Putin Dropped Support of Syria's Assad

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PM David Cameron claimed Moscow was ready to talk about a transition of power in Syria, which was later denied by Putin

Britain's prime minister said on Tuesday Russian President Vladimir Putin has made it clear at the G20 summit in Mexico that he wants Syrian President Bashar al-Assad out of power, but Putin followed up basically denying the claims.

There has been an extended effort on the part of the US and European powers to pressure Moscow to drop its support of the Assad regime. Syria acts as a economic and military client to the Russians and provides Moscow with valuable geopolitical influence in the Middle East.

British Prime Minister David Cameron said Putin had essentially abandoned the longstanding support for Assad after talks with President Barack Obama and other world leaders at the Group of 20 summit in Los Cabos, Mexico, and that discussions were now focused on a transition of power in Syria.

"There remain differences over sequencing and the shape of how the transition takes place but it is welcome that President Putin has been explicit that he does not want Assad remaining in charge in Syria," Cameron told reporters.

"What we need next is an agreement on a transitional leadership which can move Syria to a democratic future that protects the rights of all its communities," Cameron added.

But Putin denied these claims, saying at his own news conference that, "I feel like I have to repeat our position. We believe that nobody has the right to decide for other nations who should be brought to power, who should be removed from power."

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov as well said Cameron's statement that Putin does not want Assad to remain in power "does not correspond to reality."

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