

Putin Tells Xi He's "Open to Negotiating Process" on Ukraine as US Says Ceasefire "Unacceptable"

By [Zero Hedge](#)

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Latest update as of 10:17 ET, March 21, 2023:

What's being described as an initial, informal meeting between Presidents Xi and Putin is underway at the Kremlin. While the expected cordialities and expressions of closer relations were exchange, among the most notable early statements came from Putin, who said he's "open" to peace talks with Ukraine and China's mediation efforts.

"We have a lot of joint tasks, goals," Putin told his Chinese counterpart while also congratulating him on re-election as the head of the Chinese state for a third 5-year term. Xi in return said "Russia succeeded in promoting prosperity under Putin's leadership." Putin further expressed that "we will discuss your initiative [on Ukraine] which we view with respect."

"We are open for a negotiating process on Ukraine," the Russian leader added. He noted to Xi that "we have looked at your proposals for the resolution of the Ukraine conflict" and previewed that "we will discuss this question."

📸📸📸📸 "Welcome to Russia" — Xi Jinping has arrived in the Kremlin, an informal meeting with Vladimir Putin has started pic.twitter.com/BQ4rzfmytT

— AZ 📸📸📸 (@AZgeopolitics) [March 20, 2023](#)

The day prior in media interviews, White House NSC spokesperson John Kirby declared that any "call for a ceasefire" in Ukraine is "unacceptable."

Likely Moscow will only be satisfied with nothing short of a full Kiev recognition of the Donbass being under Russia; however, this is the very thing Washington will condemn and

seek to induce the Zelensky administration to resist.

According to state media commentary (RT), “Moscow has said that it would consider the proposal but has pointed to several factors that stand in the way of a peaceful resolution in Ukraine.” And more of Moscow’s perspective headed into more Xi meetings: “Those include the insistence of Kiev and its Western backers on inflicting a military defeat of Russia, their firm opposition to any sort of ceasefire, as well as a law enacted by Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky that forbids holding negotiations with Russia as long as Putin remains in office.”

Kirby on Xi meeting Putin: “If there's some sort of call for a ceasefire well that's just going to be unacceptable.”

-> Only US mediated ceasefires are good! pic.twitter.com/4SrnlBu3o

— Lord Bebo (@MyLordBebo) [March 20, 2023](#)

Chinese President Xi Jinping has arrived in Moscow on Monday for what Beijing is calling a “trip for peace” – but at a moment the White House is emphasizing “We don’t support calls for a ceasefire right now,” according to the words of White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby. “We certainly don’t support calls for a ceasefire that would be called for by the PRC in a meeting in Moscow that would simply benefit Russia,” Kirby said.

The three-day trip was kicked off as Xi’s plane touched down at Moscow’s Vnukovo airport, where Russia’s deputy prime minister for tourism, sport, culture and communications, Dmitri N. Chernyshenko, greeted him a red carpet ceremony and military brass band. His first stop was the Kremlin for an initial and informal meeting with President Putin.

“I am very glad, at the invitation of President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, to come back to the land of our close neighbor on a state visit,” Mr. Xi said upon arrival. He added: “China and Russia are good neighbors and reliable partners connected by mountains and rivers.”

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that China’s 12-point peace plan in Ukraine will top the agenda. “One way or another, issues raised in (Beijing’s) plan for Ukraine will be touched upon during the negotiations,” he said. “Comprehensive explanations will be given by President Putin” of the Russian position.”

Just hours ahead of the Chinese presidential plane being en route, both Xi and Putin published separate articles previewing the bilateral summit, with Xi emphasizing China’s push to end the Ukraine crisis reflects global support. Putin for his part wrote that he has “high expectations for the upcoming talks” with his “good old friend”.

Putin said he enjoys the “warmest relationship” with Xi, in a partnership between countries which is “consistently growing stronger” and has reached “the highest level in their history”. Speaking of the talks, the first in-person summit with the Chinese leader since the start of the Ukraine war, Putin stressed, “We have no doubt that they will give a new powerful impetus to our bilateral cooperation in its entirety.” According to more from Putin’s letter, published also in English on [state websites](#):

Yet the main thing has remained unchanged: I am talking of the firm friendship between Russia and China, which is consistently growing stronger for the benefit and in the interest of our countries and peoples. The progress made in the development of bilateral ties is impressive. The Russia-China relations have reached the highest level in their history and are gaining even more strength; they surpass Cold War-time military-political alliances in their quality, with no one to constantly order and no one to constantly obey, without limitations or taboos. We have reached an unprecedented level of trust in our political dialogue, our strategic cooperation has become truly comprehensive in nature and is standing on the brink of a new era.

Putin also at one point took a swipe directly at the United States:

Sticking more stubbornly than ever to its obsolete dogmata and vanishing dominance, the “Collective West” is gambling on the fates of entire states and peoples. The US’s policy of simultaneously deterring Russia and China, as well as all those who do not bend to the American dictation, is getting ever more fierce and aggressive. The international security and cooperation architecture is being dismantled. Russia has been labelled an “immediate threat” and China a “strategic competitor.”

Meanwhile, Washington is watching the Xi trip very closely, also as the Chinese leader is at some point soon expected to hold a phone call with Ukrainian President Zelensky....

Ahead of a meeting between Putin and Xi, White House NSC spokesperson John Kirby declares that any "call for a ceasefire" in Ukraine is "unacceptable."
pic.twitter.com/Z1MUvdITwS

— Aaron Maté (@aaronjmate) [March 20, 2023](#)

And on China’s mediation efforts in the Ukraine crisis in particular, Putin vowed that efforts to split the major Eurasian allies “won’t work”...

“The crisis in Ukraine, which was provoked and is being diligently fuelled by the West, is the most striking, yet not the only, manifestation of its desire to retain its international dominance and preserve the unipolar world order,” the Russian leader wrote. “It is crystal clear that NATO is striving for a global reach of activities and seeking to penetrate the Asia-Pacific.” He continued:

It obvious that there are forces persistently working to split the common Eurasian space into a network of “exclusive clubs” and military blocs that would serve to contain our countries’ development and harm their interests. This won’t work.

Chinese President Xi arrives in Moscow to meet with the Russian President Putin. pic.twitter.com/4GLcnf3nkt

— Clash Report (@clashreport) [March 20, 2023](#)

Putin concluded near the end of his letter, “We appreciate the well-balanced stance on the events in Ukraine adopted by the PRC, as well as its understanding of their historical

background and root causes.” He emphasized: “We welcome China’s readiness to make a meaningful contribution to the settlement of the crisis.”

The *NY Times* [notes](#) based on Chinese state media that Xi as accompanied to Moscow by “senior officials including Wang Yi, China’s highest ranking diplomat; Foreign Minister Qin Gang; and Cai Qi, director of the General Office of the Chinese Communist Party’s Central Committee.” Ukraine at the same time issued a call for Russia to remove all of its troops, saying this is the proper formula for the successful implementation of China’s ‘Peace Plan’.

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