

## Putin Open to Macron Talks If Mutual Political Will Exists



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Moscow, Dec. 21 – Russian President Vladimir Putin is ready to engage in dialogue with French President Emmanuel Macron, provided there is mutual political will, Kremlin Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov said on Friday.

Speaking to RIA Novosti, Peskov said Macron has recently expressed readiness to hold talks with Putin. He added that the Russian president also conveyed hope for dialogue with his French counterpart during a direct line with the public earlier the same day. According to Peskov, Macron's statement could be viewed positively if both sides demonstrate genuine political willingness.

Macron said on Friday, following the European Union summit in Brussels, that the EU must remain prepared for dialogue with Russia should current efforts fail to achieve a lasting peace in Ukraine. He noted that under such circumstances, negotiations with President Putin would become necessary and useful.

The French president further emphasized that the European Union should establish a common and coordinated position in advance to guide any future dialogue with Moscow.

Peskov recalled that the leaders of Russia and France last held a phone conversation on July 1. That discussion focused on potential solutions to the situation in Ukraine as well as developments in the Middle East.

The Kremlin has repeatedly stated that dialogue remains possible if conducted on the basis of mutual respect and political readiness from all parties involved.