

# [***Putin-Xi Bromance Gets New Lease of Life***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C22-B521-JBR6-9001-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** The leaders touted a new era of ties and shared a hug during Putin's first state visit of his fifth term in office.

**Body**

Russian President Vladimir Putin was welcomed on a red carpet Thursday by his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, accompanied by a military band and flag-waving children.

The two leaders projected camaraderie, hailing a new era in China-Russia relations and even [*shared a brief hug*](https://twitter.com/damienics/status/1791277243693465709).

Washington has warned Beijing cannot "have its cake and eat it too" by seeking to strengthen ties in Europe while embracing Moscow, the "biggest threat to European security in a long time."

It is notable that [*Putin*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/vladimir-putin?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s visit—his first official international trip since being elected for a fifth term—was to China, as Washington and its allies isolate Russia's economy and fund Ukrainian forces with Moscow's invasion of its neighbor in its third year.

"Putin is relying on his 'dear friend' in China to continue supporting his country's wartime economy, including through oil purchases," the Washington, D.C.-based Atlantic Council think tank wrote Thursday. "At the same time, Xi is looking to lock in a junior partner for China as its economy faces de-risking by Europe and new tariffs from the United States."

At a press conference after their talks, the leaders contrasted their vision for the future of international relations as stabler and more conducive to world peace than that of the Western-led world order, according to a statement by the Chinese foreign ministry.

Xi called Sino-Russian ties "a model" for international relations and in a thinly veiled criticism of Washington, added that the "ghost of the Cold War mentality" remains and "hegemony, bloc confrontation, and power ***politics***" continue to threaten global security," according to the statement.

Last week, Xi made a visit to Europe amid heightened friction with [*European Union*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/european-union?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) states over a range of issues, [*from espionage*](https://www.newsweek.com/china-says-nato-members-chasing-shadows-spying-cases-1894022?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) to accusations that China is flooding the continent with low-cost electric vehicles.

"The People's Republic of China cannot have its cake and eat it too. You can't have it both ways," State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel told the press on Thursday in reference to China's role in Russia's wartime economy.

"You can't want to have good, further, stronger, deepened relationships with Europe and other countries while simultaneously continuing to fuel the biggest threat to European security in a long time," he said.

[*Xi*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/xi-jinping?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and Putin declared a "no limits partnership" just days before the February 2022 invasion. China, which is now Russia's largest importer of crude oil, has become an economic lifeline to sanctions-ravaged Russia. The value of [*bilateral trade*](https://www.newsweek.com/china-exports-russia-plummet-first-time-since-war-began-1893070?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) soared from around $140 billion in 2021 to $240 billion last year, which has benefited Moscow but also deepened its dependency on Beijing.

China maintains it is neutral with regard to the conflict in Ukraine and presented its own peace plan while censoring online criticism of its neighbor at home.

In April, U.S. Secretary of State [*Antony Blinken*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/antony-blinken?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and Treasury Secretary [*Janet Yellen*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/janet-yellen?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) both pressed Chinese officials to halt financial flows that support Russia's military industrial base.

[*Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) administration sanctions have apparently spooked a growing number of Chinese banks, which Russian traders in targeted industries say have been [*blocking transactions*](https://www.newsweek.com/china-top-banks-deal-blow-russia-sanctions-1891169?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) in recent months.

The Russian president rounded out his China trip with a visit to the northeastern city of Harbin on Friday.

*Newsweek* reached out the Chinese and Russian foreign ministries via written requests for comment.

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2394519/putin-shakes-hands-xi.jpg)

**Graphic**

Putin Shakes Hands With Xi

Sergei Bobylyov/AFP via Getty Images

Russia's President Vladimir Putin and China's President Xi Jinping shake hands during a signing ceremony following their talks in Beijing on May 16. Putin's state visit, his first since beginning his fifth term, comes both countries present a united front against the U.S.-led world order.

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