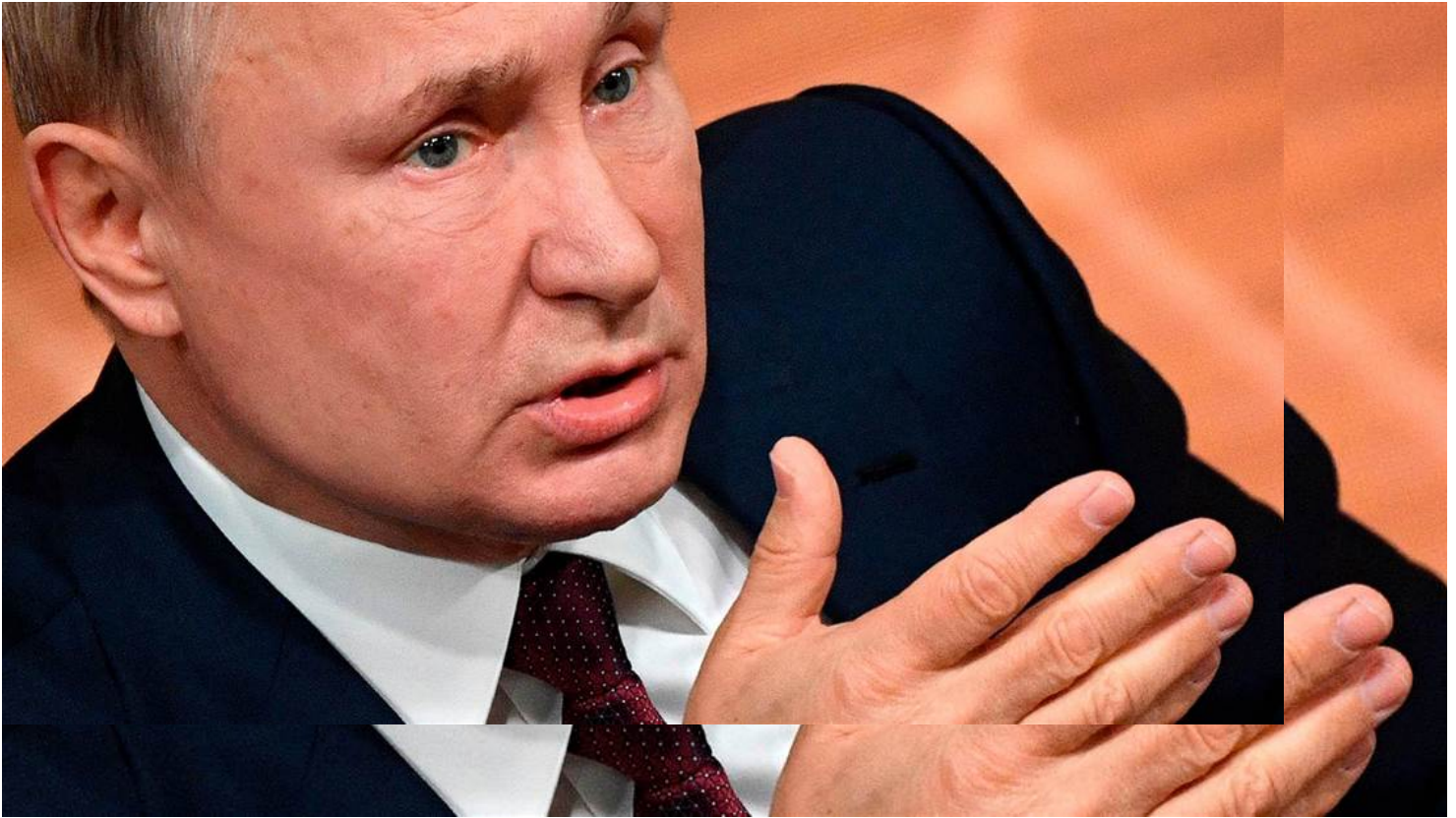


## Russia's Putin labels Trump impeachment 'domestic political infighting'

"I doubt they will want to expel from power their party representative based on what I think are absolutely made-up reasons," Putin said.



### [President Putin weighs in on Trump's impeachment at annual news conference](#)

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**By Yuliya Talmazan**

Russian President Vladimir Putin called [President Donald Trump's impeachment](#) a "continuation of domestic political infighting" as he spoke with reporters at his annual press conference in Moscow on Thursday.

For the third time in U.S. history, [the House of Representatives voted Wednesday to impeach](#) a sitting president, acting after a [daylong debate](#) on whether Trump violated his oath in pressuring Ukraine to damage a political opponent.

Asked about the vote during his marathon press conference, Putin said he didn't think that Trump's presidency was over, noting that the trial still has to go through the Senate where Republicans have a majority.

"I doubt they will want to expel from power their party representative based on what I think are absolutely made-up reasons," he said.

The Democrats, "who lost the election," were working to achieve their goals "by other means, accusing Trump of Russian collusion," he said. "It then turned out that there was no collusion and it could not form the basis for an impeachment, and now there is this made-up pressure on Ukraine."

"But your congressmen know better," he added sarcastically.

At his annual press conference, President Vladimir Putin said global climate change could threaten Arctic cities and towns built on permafrost.

Alexei Druzhinin / AP

A Senate intelligence report released in July found ["extensive" Russian interference](#) in the 2016 U.S. election. The report was issued just one day after former special counsel [Robert Mueller warned lawmakers](#) that he believed Russia would seek to interfere again in the [2020 campaign](#).

Democrats, meanwhile, have said there was ample evidence that Trump [abused his power](#) by pressuring Ukraine to announce investigations into former Vice President Joe Biden and his son Hunter while withholding almost \$400 million in aid, and that he had [obstructed Congress](#) by refusing to release any documents related to his actions.

Putin also responded to news that U.S. officials had voted to place strict sanctions on Russia, saying his country would “mirror” the moves.

On Wednesday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee advanced legislation described by one sponsor as the sanctions bill “from hell.”

The Russian leader added that Moscow was ready to extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or New START, with the U.S.

The agreement limits the number of strategic nuclear warheads that the world's two biggest nuclear powers can deploy.

“We are happy to prolong the current agreement till the end of the year,” Putin said, but added that so far, they haven't received any response from the U.S.

“If there is no SNV III,” Putin said, referring to the Russian name for the treaty, “there is nothing in the world that will contain the nuclear arms race. And that's very bad in my opinion.”

In February, the Trump administration moved to [withdraw](#) from another key missile treaty with Russia, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which has formed a [cornerstone of nuclear arms control efforts for decades](#).

Asked about [peace talks with Ukraine earlier this month](#), Putin said he thinks the negotiations should continue as long as there are positive changes.



### [Putin: 'Thank God' Ukraine not Russia now under U.S. spotlight](#)

NOV. 21, 2019 00:40

However, he added that he was alarmed by comments made by [Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the aftermath of talks held in Paris](#) on the war in the east of Ukraine, where fighting between Ukrainian troops and Russian-backed separatists has claimed more than 13,000 lives.

“There should be a direct dialogue with Donbass. It's not there,” Putin added, referring to the name of the war-ravaged region in Ukraine's east.

The president was also asked about [Russia's recent ban from the world's top sporting events for four years](#), including the next summer and winter Olympics and the 2022 soccer World Cup, for tampering with doping tests.

Putin called the decision “unfair” and “unlawful,” adding that the decision was politically motivated.

During the marathon press conference that lasted nearly four-and-a-half hours, the Russian leader addressed a myriad of other topics including health care, inflation, pension reform and internet freedom, as well as Russia's relations with Belarus, Turkey, China and the European Union.

He also touched on his own political legacy and international image.

“I know what is in my country's interest and whatever is said about me means nothing in comparison to achieving the fundamental goals needed for Russia,” he said.



Yuliya Talmazan

Yuliya Talmazan is a London-based journalist.



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