

Russian President's Visit

Talks expected to further develop bilateral ties

STAFF REPORT

Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit Japan for two days on Thursday and Friday. Putin's visit to Japan marks the first by a Russian president since November 2010 when then-President Dmitry Medvedev visited Yokohama for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit. For Putin, it is his first visit to Japan as president in 11 years. He served as president from 2000 to 2008 and was re-elected in 2012.

During this trip, the Russian president will hold summit meetings with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in the prime minister's home constituency of Nagato, Yamaguchi Prefecture, as well as Tokyo.

The two leaders are expected to discuss a wide range of topics, including is-



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Russian President Vladimir Putin talk in Lima in November. KYODO

sues surrounding a peace treaty and the progress over the eight-point economic co-

operation plan that Abe proposed to Putin in May when they met in Sochi, Russia.

They are also expected to discuss international affairs such as those issues in Syria

and North Korea.

Japan and Russia have not signed a post-World War II peace treaty due to a long-standing bilateral territorial dispute over a group of islands off Hokkaido, which are called the Southern Kurils in Russia and the Northern Territories in Japan.

The eight-point economic cooperation plan is to promote bilateral economic exchange, which includes Japan's support to facilitate cooperation between small and medium-sized companies. The plan also calls for developing industries and export bases in the Far East along with cooperation on cutting-edge technologies.

In his annual presidential address to Russia's Federal Assembly on Dec. 1, Putin expressed hope for further development in bilateral ties

with Japan.

"Russia also expects to achieve substantial progress in relations with Japan, our eastern neighbor," Putin said. "We welcome the commitment of the country's leaders to promote economic ties with Russia by launching joint projects and programs."

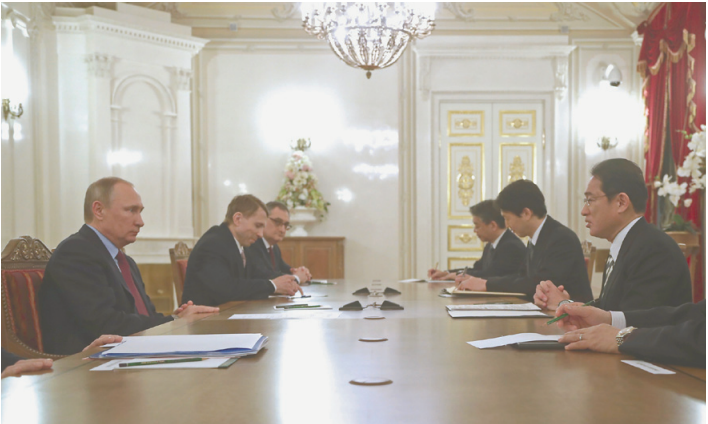
Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida visited Russia from Dec. 2 to 3 to pave the way for the upcoming summit in Japan, meeting Putin and his counterpart Sergey Lavrov.

At the meeting with Kishida, Putin said he was glad to see the continuation of contacts between the two countries.

"It is very good that our contacts are not interrupted. We are working on implementing the proposals of the prime minister in expanding our contacts in all areas of interest for us on both sides."

Kishida responded: "This time I came to Russia to conduct final preparations for your visit to Japan with the Russian Foreign Minister, (Sergey) Lavrov, in order to achieve results on a broad range of political and economic issues, including the signing of a peace treaty during your visit."

Abe and Putin have held more than 10 meetings since Abe took office in December 2012. The latest summit marks their fourth meeting this year. They met in May in Sochi, in September in Vladivostok, Russia, and in November in Lima on the sidelines of the APEC summit.



Russian President Vladimir Putin meets with Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida in St. Petersburg on Dec. 2. AP

Profile of Russian President Vladimir Putin

Vladimir Putin was born on Oct. 7, 1952, in Leningrad.

In 1970, Putin became a student of Leningrad State University's law department, earning his degree in 1975. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, he studied at KGB School No. 1 in Moscow.

After graduating from Leningrad State University, Putin was assigned to work in the state security agencies. He was first appointed to the directorate secretariat, then the counterintelligence division, where he worked for about five months. Half a year later, he was sent to operations personnel retraining courses.

Putin spent another six months

working in the counterintelligence division. Having completed his studies at the Andropov Institute, Putin left for East Germany in 1985. After returning to Leningrad from Germany in 1990, Putin became an assistant to the rector of Leningrad State University in charge of international relations.

Beginning in 1991, Putin began work as chairman of the Committee for International Relations at the St. Petersburg City Hall, and from 1994, concurrently held the position of deputy chairman of the St. Petersburg City Government. After starting work at City Hall, Putin sent in his resignation from the KGB.

In 1996, Putin moved with his family

to Moscow, where he was offered the post of deputy chief of the Presidential Property Management Directorate.

In March 1997, he was appointed deputy chief of staff of the Presidential Executive Office and chief of the Main Control Directorate. In May 1998, Putin was made first deputy chief of staff of the Presidential Executive Office, and in July 1998, he was appointed director of the Federal Security Service. From March 1999, he also held the position of secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation.

In August 1999, Putin was appointed prime minister of the Russian government. The post was offered to him by then-President Boris Yeltsin. Shortly before the year 2000 began, Yeltsin

proposed that Putin become acting president, and on Dec. 31, 1999, he became acting president of the Russian Federation.

Putin was elected president of Russia in March 2000. Putin was re-elected to a second presidential term in March 2004. In May 2008, Putin was appointed Russian prime minister by presidential executive order.

The delegates at the second round of United Russia's 12th party congress approved Putin as their candidate in the 2012 presidential election. He was elected president of Russia in March 2012.

Taken from <http://en.putin.kremlin.ru/bio>

Heartiest Welcome to
President Vladimir Putin
of the Russian Federation
on His Official Visit to Japan



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