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**'RUSSIA AT WAR WITH ANGLO-SAXON MEDIA' - PUTIN SPOKESMAN**

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One of the main reasons Russia has a bad global public image is the ongoing information war being waged by Anglo-Saxon media, President Vladimir Putins spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said, while blaming Turkey's leadership for a deadlock in relations.

Peskov made his remarks in an interview with Russian channel TVC that aired on Saturday. The fairly frank assessment was disclosed while he was speculating on why it was so hard for Russia to improve its international image. Peskov added that he believes both Moscow and Washington have suffered as a result of the infowar.

They say that Russia has a bad public image. Do you know who else now has a bad image – the United States. We are currently in a state of information warfare with the trend-setters in the information space, most notably with the Anglo-Saxons, their media, Putins spokesman said.

Peskov added that, regardless of whether one considers this war declared or undeclared, it reduces some important political matters to propaganda and counter-propaganda.

He also said he believes Russia would be better off if it was more deeply integrated in the global economy.

We need to advocate for it. We need to make our economy more competitive and involved in global competition. Only then will we confidently stand on our feet, he stressed.

Commenting on the prospects for an improvement in US-Russian relations, Peskov cautiously noted some progress, but stressed that the Kremlin, doesn't have any illusions.

I think it is possible to say that there have been positive advances. They lie in mutual atmosphere, because if we compare the atmosphere with what it was a year ago, then of course there is an evident desire to communicate, and there is readiness. At least now the understanding has matured that there is no alternative to dialogue in resolving issues which cannot be delayed, he observed.

If I was Erdogan's spokesman, I'd resign

Commenting on an even worse diplomatic crisis, Peskov called the rift in Russian-Turkish relations

a handmade disaster, saying that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogans spokesperson should have resigned over the way he mishandling the crisis.

If I held that office and things had gone the way they went, I would have resigned. Six months ago our relations with Turkey could be called exemplary. Then this disaster happened, and that disaster was handmade. Ankara was its author, and only it can control the damage, Peskov said.

Apparently, neither Erdogan, nor his spokesman or chief policy advisor, Ibrahim Kalin, has ever apologized for Turkey shooting down Russias Su-24 bomber in November. Erdogans government insisted that Turkey had been defended its sovereignty when it responded to the Russian jets alleged seconds-long violation of its airspace. The warplane had been striking terrorist positions in Syria.

Interestingly, Erdogans spokesman, Kalin, is a fellow at Georgetown Universitys Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding.

Russia didnt get much understanding with respect to this incident, however, despite having set up a special direct hotline with the Turks to avoid just such a situation during the Syrian air campaign. Moscow denied that its plane had crossed the border and demanded an apology for the tragedy, which resulted in the death of two Russian servicemen — a pilot, as well as a marine sent to an area controlled by Turkey-backed militants as a member of a rescue mission.

As the crisis unfolded, Turkey made several moves that, in Russias view, only worsened the situation. Ankara failed to communicate with the Russian military immediately after the incident, instead calling an emergency session of NATO, which Moscow perceived as an attempt to hide behind the block in order to avoid possible retribution.

Trucks with oil products cross the Syrian-Turkish border. © Ministry of defence of the Russian Federation  
Turkey has serious questions to answer: Reactions to RT report on post-ISIS town in Syria

Turkey also failed to take any steps to arrest the ethnic Turkish rebel fighter who bragged about killing the Russian pilot as he was parachuting down to the ground, an act that is considered a war crime by international law. The pilots killer, who is a member of a radical Turkish nationalist group, has since visited Turkey and given interviews to the Turkish media.

I believe that the fallout from this disaster will not be fully cleared up for generations to come. Peskov noted, adding that at the moment, Russia simply wont talk to Turkey.

This is out of question until Ankara does what has to be done in such a situation, he said.

The Kremlin spokesman also voiced skepticism over offers from Azerbaijan to play mediator between Turkey and Russia to mitigate the damage.

Those attempts ended in nothing. Any attempts to mediate this situation can't but fail, for obvious reasons, Peskov said.

Other topics covered in the interview included the Ukrainian conflict, the war in Syria, the prospects for Kurdish independence, and other policy items that fill Peskov's plate as Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman.

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