

Pelosi to Blinken: Designate Russia as State Sponsor of Terror or Else Congress Will

Currently, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria have the designation

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According to [a report from Politico](#), House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) told Secretary of State Antony Blinken to designate Russia as a “state sponsor of terrorism” or else Congress would do it.

The *Politico* report cited two sources familiar with the call who said the conversation happened earlier this week. As secretary of state, Blinken has the authority to designate a state as a sponsor of terror, and Congress could also do it by passing legislation.

The designation is meant to expand sanctions on the targeted nation. Currently, only [Cuba](#), [Iran](#), [North Korea](#), and [Syria](#) are designated by the US as state sponsors of terror. Cuba’s designation was lifted by the Obama administration but was reimposed during the final days of the Trump administration.

Since the US has already hit Russia with so many sanctions, the designation would have little impact on Moscow. But designating a state as a sponsor of terrorism opens up sanctions on other countries that do business with them. The move would also signal that US-Russia relations won’t be repaired for years to come as such designations are usually difficult to reverse.

Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) are pushing for the designation and introduced a resolution that would call on Blinken to enact it. The two senators [traveled to Kyiv earlier this month](#) and met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to discuss the idea. While in Kyiv, the two senators expressed support for a “hand-to-hand insurgency” in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine.

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