

Russia considers removing Taliban from list of terror groups ahead of upcoming cultural forum

Putin aide says Moscow is engaging Taliban in conversation as they are Afghanistan's 'de factor authority

Russia is considering removing the Taliban from its list of designated terrorist organisations, officials in Moscow said on Tuesday as Vladimir Putin eyes support from the hardline Islamist group in central Asia.

The Russian president's close aide and Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said Russia was working on removing Afghanistan's Taliban from its list of banned terrorist organisations.

Responding to a reporter's question, Mr Peskov defended Russia's engagement with the Taliban "because it is the de facto authority in Afghanistan".

His comments came a day after the Russian Foreign Ministry said it was considering "terminating the Taliban movement's status of a terrorist organisation".

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