

## Russia shows interests in resuming direct flight to the US

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Dhaka: Russia has formally asked the US to take into consideration resumption of direct flights between the two nations. In a move that might indicate a change in the tense bilateral relationship, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that negotiators had encouraged their American counterparts to reopen US airspace to Russian aircraft following a diplomatic conference in Istanbul, Turkey on February 28 .

According to a statement from the Russian ministry, the discussion in Istanbul was centered on resolving long-standing diplomatic issues and looking for "practical results" to enhance US-Russian relations. Restoring direct air connectivity was reportedly a major topic of conversation as officials underlined the necessity for actions that would benefit civilians on both sides.

Shortly after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in early

2022, flights between the US and Russia were halted. In response to stringent aviation restrictions placed on Russian aircraft by Western countries such as the US, Canada and the European Union, Moscow closed its airspace to numerous Western carriers.

The US did not specifically address the Russian desire to resume direct flights in its statement after the Istanbul summit, but it did clarify that both parties had "constructive discussions." Sanctions, diplomatic expulsions, and air travel restrictions have further widened the rift between Washington and Moscow, which has been at its lowest point in decades since the start of the conflict in Ukraine.

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