

## **'Gaps of trust' hamper Syria deal with Russia, says Barack Obama**

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**Washington:** US President Barack Obama on Monday said that an agreement with Russia on ending the violence in Syria is being hampered by "gaps of trust" between the two governments.

### **Vladimir Putin and Barack Obama**

Describing his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin as "candid" and "blunt" focusing mainly on Syria and Ukraine, Obama said, "We have had some productive conversations about what a real cessation of hostilities would look like that would allow us both... to focus our attention on common enemies."

Obama added that currently the "gaps" have not been closed in negotiations between Russia and the US in a way that they think would "actually work".

Obama urged Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to work together in the coming days to get aid to those in need.

Obama and his Russian counterpart met on Monday as talks between their governments on ending violence in Syria "ended without an agreement".

Meanwhile, Putin told reporters that a deal with the US to "ease tensions in Syria" may come "within a few days", according to Russia's state news agency TASS.

"Against all odds we have a certain rapprochement and understanding of what we might do to ease tensions in Syria and achieve mutually acceptable solutions," TASS quoted Putin as saying.

As for further details on the agreement, Putin said, "It is early now to speak of any parameters of our agreements, but I hope very much that the agreements will be reached, and I have the grounds to believe that this may happen within a few days," according to TASS.

The two leaders conversed on the sidelines of the Group of 20 summit in Hangzhou for ninety minutes, a senior US official said, and worked to clarify gaps in negotiations over on the Syrian crisis. The pair also discussed Ukraine and Russia's cyber intrusions, CNN quoted an official as saying.

The exchange came after talks between Secretary of State John Kerry and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov failed to result in a Syria ceasefire agreement. They had been working to negotiate a plan that would have boosted military cooperation between the two nations in an effort to better target terrorists and prevent civilian deaths.

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