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World Economic Forum Severs Russian Ties over Ukraine Invasion

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The World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, has temporarily severed Russian ties in the wake of Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

“We are not engaging with any sanctioned individual and have frozen all relations with Russian entities,” WEF spokesperson Amanda Russo told [Politico](#).

WEF also severed ties with a research center in Moscow and an advisory council headed by Russian President Vladimir Putin. The organization added that it would still look to bridge ties between Russia and Ukraine. Per *Politico*:

The 800-pound gorilla of the elite global conference circuit has walked a tightrope for decades when it comes to Russia: basking in the Kremlin's attention while cringing over oligarch antics.

The Forum's founder, Klaus Schwab, prides himself on making his annual meeting in Davos open to all comers, including via a personal relationship with Putin dating back to the early 1990s.

Between 2007 and 2021, Putin and his predecessor, Dmitry Medvedev have addressed WEF five times, with Putin turning down an invitation to speak in January 2015 after the invasion of Crimea.

The isolation of Russia has been tightening since the country invaded Ukraine, from economic sanctions to corporations outright boycotting the country. This week, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Starbucks, and PepsiCo. [all announced](#) they would stop temporarily doing business in Russia.

“Our hearts are with the people who are enduring unconscionable effects from these tragic events in Ukraine,” Coca-Cola said in a [brief statement](#) on Monday. “We will continue to monitor and assess the situation as circumstances evolve.”

Likewise, Starbucks CEO Kevin Johnson [said in a letter](#) to the coffee empire's partners that it will “suspend all business activity in Russia”

“We condemn the horrific attacks on Ukraine by Russia and our hearts go out to all those affected,” said Johnson. “We continue to watch the tragic events unfold and, today, we have decided to suspend all business activity in Russia, including shipment of all Starbucks products.

“Our licensed partner has agreed to immediately pause store operations and will provide support to the nearly 2,000 partners in Russia who depend on Starbucks for their livelihood,” he added.

PepsiCo echoed Coca-Cola's sentiment and announced it will be [suspending sales](#) of the beverage in Russia for the time being on top of its capital investments. McDonald's will also be closing its 850 locations in Russia.