Trump, Putin and Xi to Hold Historic Trilateral Meeting in China

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Flag of China

US President Donald Trump will meet Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin Thursday 19 on the sidelines of the APEC summit in Shenzhen, the White House said. Trump is expected to address cutting nuclear arms, said White House Press Secretary Olivia Wales. Iran will also be on the agenda, a senior US official said. Washington does not expect a deal and describes the meeting as an initial discussion. Ukraine is not expected to be raised as the US is pursuing a separate negotiating track with Kyiv and Moscow.

Nuclear Arms Control Presents a Difficult Test for Washington and Beijing

The meeting planned is important in itself, but its agenda shows the limits of the trilateral diplomacy. Advancing nuclear arms control will be difficult without reconciling Washington's demand for China's participation with Beijing's objection that its arsenal is dwarfed by those of the US and Russia. The inclusion of Iran and the exclusion of Ukraine also reflects the different diplomatic tracks of the three powers. These disagreements cannot be resolved in a single meeting. A meeting cannot replace formal negotiations. That will be its value whether the leaders open up channels for sustained dialog and find areas for cooperation – rather than a symbolic show of unity.

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