



By: TA | AP Brief

Trump's envoy arrives in Moscow ahead of Russia-Ukraine peace deadline



U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff arrived in Moscow, reported state-owned Russian media on Wednesday, days before the White House's **deadline** for Russia to reach a peace deal with Ukraine or potentially face severe economic **penalties**.

Witkoff was seen taking an early morning stroll through Zaryadye Park, a stone's throw from the Kremlin, with Kirill Dmitriev, the Russian president's envoy for investment and economic cooperation, footage aired by TASS showed.

Dmitriev had played a key role in direct peace talks between Russia and Ukraine in Istanbul in recent months, as well as discussions between Russian and U.S. officials.

Moscow is yet to confirm whether Witkoff will meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin during his stay.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov welcomed on Monday Witkoff's visit. "We consider (talks with Witkoff) important, substantive and very useful," he said.

Trump's deadline for Putin ends on Friday. Washington has threatened "severe tariffs" and other economic penalties if the killing doesn't stop in Ukraine.

"Wily characters"

So far, Trump's promises, threats and cajoling have **failed** to shift the Kremlin's position, and the stubborn diplomatic stalemate remains in place.

Meanwhile, Ukraine is losing more territory on the front line, although there is no sign of a looming collapse of its defenses.

Trump initially gave Moscow a 50-day deadline, but later **moved** up his ultimatum as the Kremlin continued to bomb Ukrainian cities.

Trump said Sunday that Russia has proven to be "pretty good at avoiding sanctions."

The threatened sanctions could include additional restrictions designed to hamper Russia's economy, as well as secondary tariffs targeting countries that buy Russian oil, including China and India.

However, Trump said Sunday that Russia has proven to be "pretty good at avoiding sanctions." "They're wily characters," he said of the Russians.

The Kremlin has insisted that international sanctions imposed since its February 2022 invasion of its neighbor have had a limited impact.

Ukraine insists the sanctions are taking their toll on Moscow's war machine and wants Western allies to ramp them up. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Monday urged the United States, Europe and other nations to impose stronger secondary sanctions on Moscow's energy, trade and banking sectors.