



By: TA | AP Insight

Putin hopes to meet with Trump as the US presses for a Ukraine peace deal



Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday he hopes to meet next week with U.S. President Donald Trump, possibly in the United Arab Emirates.

His announcement came on the eve of a White House **deadline** for Moscow to show progress toward ending the 3-year-old war in Ukraine or suffer additional economic **sanctions**.

No location had been determined Thursday morning, according to a White House official who was not authorized to speak publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The U.S. was still expected to impose additional sanctions Friday on Russia, the official said, adding that a Trump-Putin meeting would not happen if the Russian leader does not agree to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The official did not specify whether the condition was for Zelenskyy to be present at the possible U.S.-Russia summit.

Speaking of possible direct talks with Zelenskyy, Putin said he has mentioned several times that he was not against it, adding: "It's a possibility, but certain conditions need to be created" for it to happen.

The Kremlin has previously said that Putin and Zelenskyy should meet only when an agreement negotiated by their delegations is close.

Ukraine fears being sidelined by direct negotiations between Washington and Moscow, and Zelenskyy said he had phone conversations with several European leaders Thursday amid a flurry of diplomatic activity.

European countries have pledged to back Ukraine for as long as it takes to defeat Russia's invasion.

Putin's foreign affairs adviser, Yuri Ushakov, earlier brushed aside the possibility of Zelenskyy joining the summit, something the White House said Trump was ready to **consider**. Putin has **spurned** Zelenskyy's

previous offers of a meeting to clinch a breakthrough.

"We propose, first of all, to focus on preparing a bilateral meeting with Trump, and we consider it most important that this meeting be successful and productive," Ushakov said, adding that U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff's suggestion of a meeting including Ukraine's leader "was not specifically discussed."

Putin made the announcement in the Kremlin about a possible meeting with Trump after meeting with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the president of the UAE.

Asked who initiated the possible talks with the American president, Putin said that didn't matter and "both sides expressed an interest."

Kirill Dmitriev, the head of Russia's sovereign wealth fund who met with Witkoff on Wednesday, said a Trump-Putin meeting would allow Moscow to "clearly convey its position," and he hoped a summit would include discussions on mutually beneficial economic issues, including joint investments in areas such as rare earth elements.

The first U.S.-Russia summit since 2021

The meeting would be the first U.S.-Russia summit since 2021, when former President Joe Biden met Putin in Geneva. It would be a significant milestone toward Trump's **effort** to end the war, although there's no guarantee it would stop the fighting since Moscow and Kyiv remain far apart on their **conditions** for peace.

Months of U.S.-led **efforts** have yielded no progress on stopping Russia's invasion of its neighbor. The war has killed tens of thousands of troops on both sides and more than 12,000 Ukrainian civilians, according to the United Nations.

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Western officials have repeatedly accused Putin of stalling in peace negotiations to allow Russian forces time to capture more Ukrainian land. Putin previously has offered no concessions and said he will **accept** a settlement only on his terms.

At the start of his second term, Trump was conciliatory toward Putin, for whom he has long shown admiration, and even echoed some of his talking points on the war.

But he recently has expressed increasing exasperation with Putin, criticizing the Kremlin leader for his unyielding stance on U.S.-led peace efforts, and has threatened Moscow with new sanctions.

Zelenskyy seeks European involvement

Zelenskyy said European countries must also be involved in finding a solution to the war on their own continent.

“Ukraine is not afraid of meetings and expects the same bold approach from the Russian side. It is time to end the war,” he added.



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A ceasefire and long-term security guarantees are priorities in potential negotiation with Russia, he said on social media.

Securing a truce, deciding a format for a summit and providing assurances for Ukraine's future protection from invasion — a consideration that must involve the U.S. and Europe — are crucial aspects to address, Zelenskyy said.

He noted that Russian strikes on civilians have not eased despite Trump publicly urging Putin to relent.

A Russian attack Wednesday in the central Dnipro region killed four people and wounded eight others, he said.

Poll shows support for continuing the fight waning in Ukraine

A new Gallup **poll** published Thursday found that Ukrainians are increasingly eager for a peace settlement. In the survey, conducted in early July, about seven in 10 Ukrainians said their country should seek to negotiate a settlement as soon as possible.

The enthusiasm for a negotiated deal is a sharp reversal from 2022

The enthusiasm for a negotiated deal is a sharp reversal from 2022 — the year the war began — when Gallup found that about three-quarters of Ukrainians wanted to keep fighting until victory. Now only about one-quarter hold that view, with support for continuing the war declining steadily across all regions and demographic groups.

The findings were based on samples of 1,000 or more respondents ages 15 and older living in Ukraine. Some territories under entrenched Russian control, representing about 10% of the population, were excluded from surveys conducted after 2022 due to lack of access.

In Kyiv, opinions on the usefulness of a Trump-Putin meeting were divided.

“Negotiations are necessary, and we all really want the war to end ... because this war will only end with negotiations,” resident Ruslan Prindun said.

But Volodymyr Tasak said it was “unlikely” that anything good would come from U.S.-Russia talks and that Zelenskyy was “being squeezed out.”

Lyudmila Kostrova said in downtown Kyiv that Putin was simply trying to avoid U.S. sanctions by agreeing to meet with Trump. “Putin is not interested in ending the war now,” she said.