



By: TA | AP Insight

Trump's abrupt reversal as an unpleasant welcome for Zelenskyy on Monday



On Monday in Washington, the Ukrainian president will be confronted with Trump's position that a truce should not be negotiated, but a comprehensive peace solution.

Before his trip, the leaders of Ukraine's European allies will hold talks to emphasize once again that a solution is impossible without Ukraine's direct participation.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will meet Monday in Washington with U.S. President Donald Trump, who has shifted to saying an overall peace agreement — and not a ceasefire — is the next step in ending the 3 1/2-year-old war.

Trump's abrupt reversal, aligning himself with a position held by Russian President Vladimir Putin, came in a social media post on Saturday, hours after they concluded a **summit** in Alaska that produced no **agreement** to halt the fighting.

Putin has long said that Moscow is not interested in a temporary truce, and instead is seeking a long-term settlement that takes the Kremlin's interests into account.

After calls with Zelenskyy and European leaders, Trump posted that "it was determined by all that the best way to end the horrific war between Russia and Ukraine is to go directly to a Peace Agreement, which would end the war, and not a mere Ceasefire Agreement, which often times do not hold up."

In a statement after the Trump call, the European leaders did not address whether a peace deal was preferable to a ceasefire, saying they "welcomed President Trump's efforts to stop the killing in Ukraine, end Russia's war of aggression, and achieve just and lasting peace."

Trump and Ukraine's European allies had been calling for a ceasefire ahead of any negotiations.

Trump's statement that a peace agreement should be reached before a ceasefire appears to indicate Trump's thinking is "shifting

towards Putin," an approach that would allow Moscow to keep fighting while negotiating, said Nigel Gould-Davies, a senior fellow at the International Institute of Strategic Studies in London.

Zelenskyy, who was not invited to Alaska for the summit, said he had a "long and substantive" conversation with Trump early Saturday. He said they would "discuss all of the details regarding ending the killing and the war" on Monday.

It will be Zelenskyy's first visit to the U.S. since Trump **berated** him publicly for being "disrespectful" during an extraordinary Oval Office meeting on Feb. 28.

Trump, who also held calls with European leaders Saturday, confirmed the White House meeting and said that "if all works out, we will then schedule a meeting with President Putin."

Trump **rolled** out the red carpet on Friday for Putin, who was in the U.S. for the first time in a decade and since the start of his full-scale invasion of Ukraine. But he gave little concrete detail afterward of what was discussed. On Saturday, he posted on social media that it "went very well."

Trump had **warned** ahead of the summit of "very severe consequences" for Russia if Putin doesn't agree to end the war.

Zelenskyy seeks European involvement

Zelenskyy reiterated the importance of involving European leaders, who also were not at the summit.

"It is important that Europeans are involved at every stage to ensure reliable security guarantees together with America," he said. "We also discussed positive signals from the American side regarding participation in guaranteeing Ukraine's security."

Zelenskyy previously has said that European partners put on hold a proposal to establish a foreign troop presence in Ukraine to deter Russian aggression

He didn't elaborate, but Zelenskyy previously has said that European partners put on hold a **proposal** to establish a foreign troop presence in Ukraine to deter Russian aggression because it lacked an American backstop.

Zelenskyy said he spoke to Trump one-on-one and then in a call with other European leaders. In total, the conversations lasted over 90 minutes.

Trump puts onus on Zelenskyy and Europe

Trump said in Alaska that "there's no deal until there's a deal," after Putin claimed the two leaders had hammered out an "understanding" on Ukraine and warned Europe not to "torpedo the nascent progress."

During an interview with Fox News Channel before returning to Washington, Trump insisted the onus going forward might be on Zelenskyy "to get it done," but said there would also be some involvement from European nations.

In their statement after speaking to Trump, major European leaders said they were ready to work with Trump and Zelenskyy toward "a trilateral summit with European support."

The statement from French, German, Italian, British, Finnish, Polish and European Union said that "Ukraine must have ironclad security guarantees" and welcomed U.S. readiness to provide them.

"It will be up to Ukraine to make decisions on its territory," they said. "International borders must not be changed by force."

The harsh reality is that Russia has no intention of ending this war anytime soon - Kaja Kallas

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said "the harsh reality is that Russia has no intention of ending this war anytime soon," noting that Moscow launched new attacks on Ukraine even as the delegations met.

"Putin continues to drag out negotiations and hopes he gets away with it. He left Anchorage without making any commitments to end the killing," she said.

Ukrainian and Russian forces are fighting along a 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line. Since spring, Russian troops have accelerated their gains, capturing the most territory since the opening stages of the war.

"Vladimir Putin came to the Alaska summit with the principal goal of stalling any pressure on Russia to end the war," said Neil Melvin, director of international security at the London-based Royal United Services Institute. "He will consider the summit outcome as mission accomplished."

Questions on a trilateral meeting

Zelenskyy voiced support for Trump's proposal for a trilateral meeting with the U.S. and Russia. He said that "key issues can be discussed at the level of leaders, and a trilateral format is suitable for this."

But Putin's foreign affairs adviser, Yuri Ushakov, told Russian state television Saturday that a possible three-way meeting "has not been touched upon yet" in U.S.-Russia discussions.



France, the U.K. and Germany will co-host a video call Sunday afternoon of “coalition of the willing” nations that could help monitor and uphold any deal to end fighting

Zelenskyy wrote on X that he told Trump that "sanctions should be strengthened if there is no trilateral meeting or if Russia tries to evade an honest end to the war."

In apparent effort to bolster Zelenskyy's hand before he meets Trump, France, the U.K. and Germany will co-host a video call Sunday afternoon of so-called "coalition of the willing" nations that could, in one way or another, help monitor and uphold any deal to end fighting, French President Emmanuel Macron's office said.

Russian officials and media struck a largely positive tone after Friday's summit, with some describing it as a symbolic end to Putin's isolation in the West.

Former President Dmitry Medvedev, deputy head of Russia's Security Council, praised the summit as a breakthrough in restoring high-level dialogue between Moscow and Washington, describing the talks as "calm, without ultimatums and threats."

Putin has "broken out of international isolation" and back on the world stage as one of two global leaders, and "wasn't in the least challenged" by Trump, who also ignored an arrest warrant issued for Putin by the International Criminal Court, said Laurie Bristow, who was British ambassador to Russia from 2016 to 2020.

"Unless Mr. Putin is absolutely convinced that he cannot win militarily, the fighting is not

going to stop," Bristow told The Associated Press. "That's the big takeaway from the Anchorage summit."