



By: Tomorrow's Affairs Staff

Why is Moscow furious after Trump's talks with the Europeans?



Moscow is furious that the echo from the supposedly historic meeting between Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump in Anchorage, Alaska, was short-lived.

Russia hoped that this meeting would give it enough time and then diplomatic space to return from its status of an international pariah to the big world stage.

Alaska **seemed** to be a wide-open window for Moscow to make a big comeback, not only in the case of Ukraine but also in its general position towards the West.

Economic concessions from the US, which the Russian delegates discussed more than their American counterparts, would facilitate this comeback.

However, the Kremlin's expectations only lasted a few days, as Donald Trump received the most important European allies in Washington, including Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The implications of these talks at this stage are devastating for Russia's view of the peace process in Ukraine, and even more so for the full rehabilitation of relations with the West.

Making rifts in the Western block

Sergey Lavrov was responsible for disqualifying the agreements reached by Trump and the European allies. He did so with great rigour but without much diplomatic consideration.

Moscow takes offence at the Western allies' agreement on security guarantees for Kyiv against a possible renewed Russian attack, and in particular at the willingness of many of them to send their troops to Ukraine for this purpose.

For Lavrov, who also spoke on behalf of Putin, such an **agreement** is an "unethical attempt" by Europeans to change the position of Trump

and his administration regarding the development of the Ukraine crisis.

The Russians are returning to an old and never well-executed strategic goal – to cause a rift in the Western alliance

This is only the first important point of Russian protest. Apparently satisfied with what they heard and received in Anchorage, the Russians are thus returning to an old and never well-executed strategic goal – to cause a rift in the Western alliance, between the US on the one hand and Europe on the other.

President Trump is apparently not only seen in Russia as the only "worthy" interlocutor for Moscow (which still sees itself as a global superpower). They also favour him because of his general policy towards Ukraine, but also towards the European allies, from whom he has tended to distance himself since the beginning of his term in office.

Stronger than NATO

The second, even more important reason for Russian grumbling after the US-European meeting in Washington is the "danger" they see in the de facto and strong support for Kyiv to oppose any possible attempt by Russia to renew its aggression after the peace is once concluded.

The willingness of some European military giants, such as France and Britain, as well as the Baltic states, to send their troops to Ukraine to ensure its security, is not what Moscow expected when it launched its invasion three and a half years ago.

Although it would not be a formal admission of Ukraine to NATO, such a security arrangement would be much more significant in Russia's eyes than Kyiv's formal membership of the alliance. It would mean the presence of thousands of soldiers from some of NATO's most influential member states on Ukrainian

territory.

Lavrov's bizarre comparison, suggesting that this arrangement would **equate** to "foreign military intervention," highlights the level of nervousness and anger that prevailed in Moscow following the US-European summit in Washington.

Moscow will demand the absence of any Western military presence in Ukraine during future negotiations

However, this also indicates that Moscow will demand the absence of any Western military presence in Ukraine during future negotiations. It will even set this demand as a red line for the conclusion of a comprehensive peace agreement.

The Russian top diplomat is thus setting a trap if he allows the possibility of an agreement on security guarantees for Ukraine by **expanding** the diplomatic framework for this agreement to include China, i.e., the UN.

Abuse of the UN and China's interference

Russian maximalist and expected outcomes of the negotiations are concealed between the explicit "no" to Western troops in Ukraine and the "maybe" if the agreements are approved with the participation of China (i.e., the UN Security Council).

Since the start of the invasion of Ukraine, the UN has been a desirable refuge for all Russian, alleged, peace initiatives.



Bringing the war in Ukraine into the deadlocked and ineffective UN mechanism would be a big win for Moscow

Under the guise of concern for the continued existence of the international order, Russia has been abusing the UN as a platform for peace for years and, at the same, time blocking its decision-making in the Ukraine crisis.

Moscow's constant threat of a Russian veto makes the UN Security Council the ideal platform for any future agreement on Ukraine.

Bringing the war in Ukraine into the deadlocked and ineffective UN mechanism would be a big win for Moscow, because the crisis would remain unresolved for years and would be subject to repeated Russian pressure, including military pressure.

This is why Sergei Lavrov is (for the first time) involving China in the possible outcome of the war in Ukraine. "Russia will accept if the security guarantees to Ukraine are provided on equal basis with the participation of countries like China, the United States, the United Kingdom and France."

This move could be diplomatically very risky for Moscow, as China does not seem interested in being involved in the final resolution of the Ukraine crisis.

The Kremlin's decision to involve Beijing in resolving the Ukrainian equation could seem like an exaggerated, even arrogant demand by Moscow, which overestimates its global role, especially in relation to China.

On the other hand, Russia's involvement of China also seems like a provocation, as Beijing

has remained neutral since the start of the war in Ukraine and has sought a solution in existing international forums. But basically, it has been a crisis, in the resolution of which Beijing all along saw no direct role.

"China did not create the Ukraine crisis, nor is China a party to it. Even so, China has since day one held an objective and fair position and promoted talks for peace," **said** the spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in the US for Fox News.