



By: TA | AP Brief

Rubio and Witkoff are meeting with Ukraine's negotiators in Florida



Top Trump administration officials are meeting Ukrainian negotiators in Florida this weekend, pushing to broker an end to Russia's war in Ukraine and setting the stage for key talks planned this week in Moscow with Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of President Donald Trump, were expected to sit down with a Ukrainian delegation to further hash out the details of a proposed peace framework — talks that come at a sensitive moment for Ukraine as it continues to push back against Russian forces that invaded the country in 2022.

On Friday just before the Florida sit-down, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced the resignation of his powerful chief of staff, **Andrii Yermak**, who up until that point had been the country's lead negotiator in **talks with the U.S.**

The announcement came after Yermak's home was searched by **anti-corruption investigators**. Zelenskyy's government has been roiled by fallout from a scandal over \$100 million embezzled from the energy sector through kickbacks paid by contractors, causing newfound domestic pressures for Zelenskyy.

It was only a week ago that Rubio had met with Yermak in Geneva, with each side saying the talks had been positive in putting together a revised peace plan.

Now, the Ukrainian delegation includes **Andrii Hnatov**, the head of Ukraine's armed forces; Andrii Sybiha, Ukraine's foreign minister; and Rustem Umerov, head of Ukraine's security council, Zelenskyy has said.

Diplomats have been focused on revisions to Trump's proposed **28-point plan** developed in negotiations between Washington and Moscow.

Russian demands

That plan was criticized as being too weighted

toward Russian demands. It had initially envisioned Ukraine ceding the entire eastern region of the Donbas to Russia — a sticking point for Kyiv.

The plan — which Trump has since downplayed as a “concept” or a “map” to be “fine-tuned” — would also impose limits on the size of Ukraine's military, block the country from joining NATO, and require Ukraine to hold elections in 100 days.

Negotiators have indicated the framework has changed, but it's not clear how its provisions have been altered.

Trump said on Tuesday that he would send Witkoff and perhaps Kushner to Moscow this week to meet with Putin about the plan.

Both Witkoff and Kushner, like Trump, hail from the world of real estate that values dealmaking over the conventions of diplomacy.

The pair also were behind a 20-point proposal that led to a **ceasefire in Gaza**.

The Ukrainian delegation would swiftly and substantively work out the steps needed to end the war - Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Zelenskyy wrote on X that the Ukrainian delegation would “swiftly and substantively work out the steps needed to end the war.”

In his nightly address on Saturday, Zelenskyy said the American side was “demonstrating a constructive approach.”

“In the coming days it is feasible to flesh out the steps to determine how to bring the war to a dignified end,” he said.

On Saturday, Russian drone and missile attacks in and around Ukraine's capital of Kyiv killed at least three people and wounded dozens more, officials said.

Fresh attacks overnight into Sunday killed one person and wounded 11 others, local officials

said, when a drone hit a nine-story apartment block in the city of Vyshhorod in the Kyiv region.