



By: TA | AP Brief

A long Mideast war could take away from support for Ukraine



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressed concern that a prolonged U.S.-Israeli war on Iran could further erode America's support for Ukraine as Washington's global priorities shift and Kyiv braces for reduced deliveries of critically needed Patriot air defense missiles.

Ukraine desperately needs more U.S.-made **Patriot air defense systems** to help it counter Russia's daily barrages, Zelenskyy said, speaking to The Associated Press in an exclusive interview late Saturday in Istanbul.

Russia's relentless pounding of urban areas behind the front line following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than four years ago has killed thousands of civilians.

It has also targeted **Ukraine's energy supply** to disrupt industrial production of Ukraine's newly developed drones and missiles, while also denying civilians heat and running water in winter.

"We have to recognize that we are not the priority for today," Zelenskyy said. "That's why I am afraid a long (Iran) war will give us less support."

A loss of focus on Ukraine

The latest **U.S.-brokered talks** between envoys from Moscow and Kyiv ended in February with no sign of a breakthrough.

Zelenskyy, who has accused Russia of "trying to drag out negotiations" while it presses on with its invasion, said Ukraine remains in contact with U.S. negotiators about a potential deal to end the war and has continued to press for stronger security guarantees.

But, he said, even those discussions reflect a broader loss of focus from Ukraine.

The Patriots are essential for intercepting Russian ballistic missiles

His most immediate concern, Zelenskyy said, are the Patriots — essential for intercepting Russian ballistic missiles — as Ukraine still lacks an effective alternative.

These U.S. systems were never delivered in sufficient quantities to begin with, Zelenskyy said, and if the Iran war doesn't end soon, "the package — which is not very big for us — I think will be smaller and smaller day by day."

"That's why, of course, we are afraid," he said.