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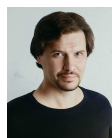
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# Cold hard land, cold hard bargain: Putin and Trump head off to Alaska

From a stalled war to a broken oil embargo, the Kremlin's leverage has never looked stronger ahead of the August summit



By **Sergey Poletaev**, information analyst and publicist, co-founder and editor of the *Vatfor project*.

[Vatfor project](#)



US President Donald Trump (L) and Russian President Vladimir Putin. © Chris McGrath/Getty Images

Steve Witkoff's visit to Moscow has marked a striking shift in American rhetoric. Just a couple of months ago, in June and July, Donald Trump was threatening the Kremlin with new sanctions and issuing ultimatums. Now the agenda includes a Putin-Trump summit scheduled for August 15 in Alaska. This 180-degree turn has been accompanied by leaks hinting at possible deals and a return to the "thaw" in relations we last saw in the spring.

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If the meeting goes ahead, the Russian president will come to it in a far stronger position than he did a few months ago. Back in the spring, Trump's push for a peace deal looked like a personal whim, and the so-called 'party of war' and globalists still had cards to play: Senator Lindsey Graham's sanctions package, fresh US arms deliveries to Ukraine, and the proposals floated by French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer about sending Western troops to Ukraine.

Now it looks as if Trump is the one coming back to Vladimir Putin – driven by the failure of his oil embargo. On top of that, there's an appearance – an illusion, perhaps – that Putin is backed by a united BRICS front, something Trump's own moves have helped bring about. Whether that front actually exists, or can survive for long, is another matter. But at this moment, one of Trump's key pillars of leverage looks shaky, if not entirely knocked out from under him.

### Ukraine's last stand

The other pillar is the war itself. In February and March, the front lines were static, and Ukrainian forces were still holding a foothold in Russia's Kursk Region. Kiev was touting its 'drone wall' project, billed as an impenetrable shield against the Russian army. Since then, Ukraine has suffered a major defeat in the Kursk border area, and the summer offensive that followed has gone Moscow's way – more decisively than at the same point last year. The much-hyped 'drone wall' turned out to be far less sturdy than promised.

Kiev still clings to the hope of holding the line, but barely. Even the most pro-Ukrainian Western analysts now admit, in so many words: *We don't understand how they're still hanging on.* From the rhetoric of even the fiercest globalist hawks, it's clear they know no amount of weapons shipments can reverse the battlefield trend – at best, they can slow it. That's why the 'party of war' in the West, and Kiev itself, have suddenly taken up Trump's earlier call for a cease-fire.



**Read more:** Russia is bleeding Ukraine's defenses. Slowly, deliberately, everywhere

Which means Trump now needs talks with Putin not

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because he personally wants peace, but because the battlefield realities are pushing him there. Nobody knows how much longer the Ukrainian military can hold. From Trump's point of view, the sooner he can lock in some kind of deal with Moscow, the better. And that urgency is another advantage for Putin. If the second round of talks collapses, he loses nothing: the Russian army can simply keep advancing until the Ukrainian front breaks – or until the next peace initiative with Washington, whichever comes first.

Does Moscow have vulnerabilities? Yes – and the biggest is the economy. Even without the oil embargo, a surging ruble has blown a hole in the federal budget: by the end of July, the deficit had already reached 4.9 trillion rubles (\$61.4 billion) – 1.1 trillion rubles more than the *planned* deficit for the entire year. But Russia's financial buffer is strong enough that it can run shortfalls like this for years without crippling the economy.

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### Talking about Ukraine without Ukraine



**Read more:** Here's what Putin and Trump want from the Ukraine peace deal

Whatever Putin and Trump agree on, it will be Trump's job to make sure Ukraine and Europe fall in line. That didn't happen last time: even if the two leaders had the outlines of a deal, European hawks and Kiev managed to torpedo

it. Now, it looks as if Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky and the 'big three' in Europe – Macron, Starmer, and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz – are trying to do it again.

Even if Ukraine's army is on its last legs and the front is on the brink of collapse, don't expect Ukraine's commander-in-chief, Aleksandr Syrsky, to pull a General Ludendorff and tell Zelensky the war is lost. And don't expect Zelensky to act like Kaiser Wilhelm and take responsibility for surrender. Far more likely, with encouragement from Europe, they'll fight to the bitter end – only to blame Putin for the disaster and hand Trump his own personal Afghanistan.

\*\*\*

All of these contradictions are almost impossible to untangle in a single summit. So what's the likeliest outcome if the

## Putin-Trump meeting does happen?

Probably a set of grand, dramatic, but ultimately empty promises – just enough for Trump to tick the *'peacemaker'* box on his personal scoreboard, and just as quickly forgotten. At best, we might get a document with the fate of the first Minsk agreement: signed in the fall of 2014, it was followed by another six months of fighting that ended with Ukraine's defeat at Debaltseve, paving the way for Minsk-2 – a deal that held for the next several years.

ANALYSIS

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**g getreal155** 8/11/2025 at 12:31 PM 0

I really hope Putin is not making a big mistake by stepping on US soil.  
The motivation for making this insanely risky move is a real mystery to me

[Reply](#)

**M Michael Lawrence** 8/11/2025 at 12:28 PM 0

I am with Brian Berletic on this one . I am also at a loss to understand why Mr Putin would meet Trump in his own territory . This is a very dangerous situation . America is cynical and stupid enough to pull a fast one . I am sure Mr Putin has the best advice and the whole scenario has been gamed to the last detail . America is incapable of reaching an agreement ,it does not even run its own government . They leave all that to Tel-Aviv.

[Reply](#)

**A Aldy Machete** 8/11/2025 at 11:29 AM 0

military and political supports to Russia’s trading partners is a must. So western pressure will yield positively for Russia and the South in general.

[Reply](#)

**J John Nicholoft** 8/11/2025 at 11:20 AM 1

PRESIDENT PUTIN, DO NOT GO TO ALASKA!  
trump is s proven confirmed LIAR.  
Liars always lie,  
Do not go to Alaska.  
Trump is not to be trusted.

[Reply](#)

**Fetid01** 8/11/2025 at 9:22 AM 0

Putin will be arrested on the ICC warrents.....

[Reply](#)

**A Alex Litvenenko** 8/11/2025 at 8:48 AM 0


I'm not sure I agree with the sentiment *Talking about Ukraine without Ukraine*. I think Mr. Putin wants to talk about Russia. And yet, here we are again: Zelensky et al; is yet *again* throwing a tantrum at the prospect of Mr. Putin advocating for Russia while a few sets of eyes take their attention away from Ukraine. This is his third tantrum in seven months, pitching a fit everytime Mr. Putin utters a word to Trump without Zelensky present. I hope Mr. Trump takes note.

[Reply](#)

**E Encrypt Digit** 8/11/2025 at 8:45 AM 1

USA Fox. World have no trust on usa anymore 😞

[Reply](#)

 **Jed Slater** 8/11/2025 at 7:30 AM 0

Russia should recognize the West's apparent determination to undermine it through various means. However, the West may be overestimating its support among its own population. Many people share values of peace and prosperity, similar to those in Russia, and may not endorse aggressive actions. Fostering friendship and cooperation could be more beneficial than creating more enemies. Regarding Ukraine, addressing extremism and promoting peace might be a step towards regional peace.

[Reply](#)

**J J Peebles** 8/11/2025 at 4:09 AM 0

Perceptive of the article to note that the Russia fiscal deficit is growing. Were it that Americans were more sensitive to this.

With the end of war, spending can come down, producing a peace dividend.

We saw this in the end of the first Cold War. Bases closed, and for the shortest time, peace broke out.


Enter the Project for the New American Century, PNAC, headed by Richard Pearle and his neocon pals. Soon after came 9-11, its "Pearl Harbor-type event." Then the wars based on 9-11.

America needed a new enemy. So they created one. Of course at the heart of this war were bankers, mostly Jewish and hardcore. This funding accounted for much of the antisemitism in Europe that the Nazis capitalized on. No, ethnic cleansing—the psychic trigger—didn't end Germany's troubles.

The next psychic triaader for the Mass Formation Psychosis


is Russia. The reality check might be flattened German cities once again. Peace up. End Ukraine. Don't let the love of money perpetuate the conflict.

[Reply](#)

 **Claude Taillefer** 8/11/2025 at 6:31 AM 0

I see the same as you, this would be a good time for Russia to use the transformation of the Russian States and Russians to creating a much bigger economy.

[Reply](#)

 **Claude Taillefer** 8/11/2025 at 6:28 AM 0

I'm going to wait and see how this meeting goes. Lots the Ziocons can attempt until Friday.

[Reply](#)

**A Ana** 8/11/2025 at 6:00 AM 1

Why did President Putin agree to meet Trump in Alaska?  
Why?  
Who and how will ensure security for President Putin?  
Can't comprehend why would Russia risk the life of their president.

[Reply](#)

**L Lamar Areva** 8/11/2025 at 3:58 AM 0

Russians «Vladimir Putin was more naive, than I thought ...  
How ? cannot they see (perceive) that this meeting is rouse use by the U.S / Trump in order to get him on American soil, so they can arrest him, on ICC arrest warrant list .  
«Americans cannot be trusted if you look at their long, history of backstabbing — betraying — sabotage and double-dealings! He will be must safer on Russian territory... Because Americans \_ Europeans enemies will be busy coordinating behind the scene to destroy [eliminate] him from the global landscape, or to place him in ICC «dock» Russians please become awake and cancel this insane idea now ... *Before* it to late !!

[Reply](#)

**T Tommy Beau** 8/9/2025 at 4:40 PM 24

This is not about Ukraine, but about dismantling the centuries old hegemony which is the current 'Rules-based Order' dictated by the City of London and enforced by US military power with 800 bases across the world. Only by disentangling America from this Giant Squid can Trump advance the MAGA agenda and rescue America from desolation. Through this lens, Putin and Trump have a

common enemy.

[Reply](#)

**J** **John Moffett** 8/9/2025 at 5:26 PM [↑](#) **11**

Trump will never fix any problems in the US because they mostly stem from the wealthy oligarchs who are either friends with Trump, or competitors. Trump is not going to do anything to mess with the donor class, and therefore can't fix any of the problems caused by the donor-class.

[Reply](#)

**Davy Mitchell** 8/9/2025 at 6:06 PM [↑](#) **9**

This is about a Russian asset called Oreshnik and the zio/neocons fear of it.

[Reply](#)

**R** **Ronald Rat** 8/9/2025 at 6:34 PM [↑](#) **2**

It's more like 50 years, not centuries.

[Reply](#)

**T** **Tommy Beau** 8/10/2025 at 4:30 PM [↑](#) **0**

This traces back to the European Empires, especially the British Empire. The entities that morphed from them are what we have today.

[Reply](#)

**Abul Azad** 8/9/2025 at 7:57 PM [↑](#) **0**

Minsk Agreement is the foundation for further dialogue and to ratify the agreement and move forward to end hostilities and conflicts, but the Zionists can't be trusted as no commitment is sacred to them and they are arrogantly hypocrites

[Reply](#)

**E** **Eleni R** 8/9/2025 at 8:20 PM [↑](#) **2**

the centuries old hegemony of banking cartel that is owned by several banking dynasties of degenerates and psychopaths

[Reply](#)

**J. D.** 8/9/2025 at 8:57 PM [↑](#) **5**

Like Afghanistan, Trump wants to stop the bleeding on Ukraine in order to focus on China.

[Reply](#)

**Vova** 8/9/2025 at 8:57 PM [↑](#) **1**

The talks between Trump and Putin are unlikely to bring

The talks between Trump and Putin are unlikely to bring about a quick end to the war in Ukraine, as Russia's demands remain the same, including recognition of its sovereignty over Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson, as well as Ukraine's agreement to demilitarization, neutrality, non-intervention by foreign forces, and the holding of new elections – Google «Why are the Trump-Putin talks unlikely to bring about a quick end to the war in Ukraine?»...

Therefore, despite the Kremlin's agreement to a meeting between Trump and Putin, there is no reason to believe Moscow is willing to budge on its preconditions...

So why would Putin agree to the talks at this stage? One possibility is that Putin hopes dialogue can avoid the secondary sanctions Trump threatened to impose on Moscow's trading partners on Friday... The Kremlin believes that through dialogue it could convince Trump of the validity of its conditions for ending the war...

Another reason is that Putin has to continue discussing US peace proposals for Ukraine. Otherwise, the US will accuse him of blocking the possibility of peace in the proxy war. In other words, Putin is playing Trump like a fiddle...

Of course, Trump will proclaim the meeting a great success – LOL...

Trump has also suggested holding a trilateral summit with Putin and Zelensky, but Putin has rejected these suggestions, saying the conditions for a meeting are still far off...

Even if the Kremlin eventually agree to a trilateral meeting, Moscow's demands for a ceasefire have proven so intractable that it is unclear what bringing Zelensky and Putin face-to-face might achieve...

So the gulf between Russia and Ukraine remains the same & Trumpestate continue taking the MAGA's Trumptards for a ride... Again?

[Reply](#)



**Michel Fortin** 8/9/2025 at 9:32 PM ↕

2

Another brainwashed MAGA lover...  
Rescue America !  
You have a better chance of having Superman or Batman do it than the piece of shit Trump

[Reply](#)



**Joe** 8/9/2025 at 9:55 PM ↕

0

Spot on .  
The west is flirting with nuclear war

The west is running with nuclear war hoping it will make Russia give up its victory in Ukraine back off and let the west continue to rule the world.

[Reply](#)

**as dubaniew** 8/10/2025 at 12:00 AM 1

a perpetual war machine economy that does not need to win or lose a war, it just need war, has laundered into its sub-human economy the global criminal cartels to control the GREEDY ant math – expand. consume. all-gone, die.

any questions?

[Reply](#)

**A Adasim** 8/11/2025 at 2:50 AM 1

Not really: Trump is actually a Zionist neocon masquerading as a MAGA. The MAGA crowd is irreversibly turning against hiim according to Marjory Taylor and recent surveys.

[Reply](#)

**A Adasim** 8/11/2025 at 2:42 AM 1

What needs to be clearly understood is that events on the Ukrainian battlefield( Russia’s imminent victory) are what’s really driving the noisy theatrics in Washington and Brussels. And for the RF that’s basically all that matters.

[Reply](#)

**A Atim Harrydes** 8/11/2025 at 2:21 AM 2

This summit is a diversion of global attention on the genocide in Palestine and the icvupation of Gaza.

[Reply](#)

**A Atim Harrydes** 8/11/2025 at 2:05 AM 2

RT should update the global citizens on the very safety of the global President. Every moment counts.

[Reply](#)

**A Atim Harrydes** 8/11/2025 at 2:01 AM 0

Great article. I remember recently a US statician was fired for reporting poor performance. Now the journalist might come next if they report what is not desired. Otherwise, this meeting will come with all forms of interesting press briefs.

[Reply](#)

**L Leo Orsi** 8/10/2025 at 5:35 PM 4

The USA has changed too. Trump and MAGA have a major

political victory over their war party opponents. And the Trump supporters want an end to USA throwing money into the dumpster fire of Ukraine. So, we already see the plan: Trump is letting EU buy obsolete arms and send them to Ukraine. Kiev resells them on the black market, Zelenski and pals pocket the money. The only land swap is how much territory Russia will allow Ukraine to keep.

[Reply](#)

**G GeorgeBMac** 8/10/2025 at 11:50 PM -1

Trump didn't win. Democrats lost what should have been an easy lay-up win against a sex offender and convicted felon.

[Reply](#)

**K M** 8/11/2025 at 12:12 AM 1

G B Mac, Trump is the real America. No matter how bad, or any disaster, he will get 40 ish % approval. He has advantages and control over the Electoral College, Supreme Court, judges, Media, billionaires, militias and Middle America . The Dumb-ocrats are running around in clueless circles.

[Reply](#)

**wargamex** 8/11/2025 at 12:39 AM 0

Low IQ Liberal generic name-calling nonsense. *Whiny Loser.*

[Reply](#)

**G Goedelite Kurt** 8/10/2025 at 8:12 PM 2

Putin should tell Trump to come to Vladivostok.

[Reply](#)

**K M** 8/11/2025 at 12:15 AM 1

G Kurt, or how about just across Vladivostok, in Harbin

[Reply](#)

**M Malvina Carabas** 8/10/2025 at 11:58 PM -2

This is america – russian war . Talking to the enemy , is just plain and simple treason . Putin should've been deposited long time ago . Even zelenski has a spine , not Putin . But every nation does deserve their leaders .

[Reply](#)

**Hanspeter** 8/10/2025 at 9:13 PM 2

The whole world knows how fast DJ T rotates and how long it takes him for the next 180°.

President Putin also knows who he is going to meet: The war criminal who delivered the weapons that killed so many Russian civilians and soldiers including the sons of the mothers he recently met.

[Reply](#)

**Robert** 8/10/2025 at 11:24 PM 1

I sincerely hope so.

[Reply](#)

**Robert** 8/10/2025 at 11:24 PM 0

I am very concerned about this upcoming meeting between Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin. History clearly shows the dishonest and corrupt dealings of the West with Russia. The west has always sought to win on the negotiating table what it can never achieve on the battlefield. Maybe it would be better for Russia to complete the objectives of the SMO, and to present the west with a "fait accompli".

[Reply](#)

**M Manuel Fiadeiro** 8/10/2025 at 6:51 PM 1

I hope Putin will not fall for this trap. No one can trust Trump. Look at what Trump is doing to Romania, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan. The meeting may not take place, because a «mystery» disaster would happen to Putin's airplane.

[Reply](#)

**G GeorgeBMac** 8/10/2025 at 7:38 PM -1

And your solution is?????

[Reply](#)

**M Manuel Fiadeiro** 8/10/2025 at 10:22 PM 3

Never trust the US. Talk only after Russia completely defeated the US and NATO in Ukraine.

[Reply](#)

**M Manuel Fiadeiro** 8/10/2025 at 11:00 PM 3

Don't leave the plane on the tarmac in Alaska. Return the plane to Russia and fly again to pick up Putin. Don't refill in the US.

[Reply](#)

**K Keir Brown** 8/9/2025 at 4:16 PM 16

The Kremlin is totally insane if it lets President Putin go anywhere near Alaska., He will be assassinated by the CIA

without question.

[Reply](#)

**d durward saar** 8/9/2025 at 4:40 PM [↑](#) **8**

If they can murder a Czar a president is no issue. If Trump wants a meeting make it in Moscow.

Russians are too honest for their own good, they fail to see others are not.

Same mistake the Czar made, you don't leave your enemy alive and you certainly don't put yourself in their hands.

[Reply](#)

**S S S** 8/9/2025 at 4:43 PM [↑](#) **-2**

So we could get the unstable hot head Medvedev in his place, lol? Surely you are on drugs.

[Reply](#)

**G Goedelite Kurt** 8/10/2025 at 8:10 PM [↑](#) **4**

I see no reason to call the V.M. of the RF's Security Council an «unstable hot head». Yes, he is not so temperate as the excellent Pres. Putin, but Minister Medvedev does not hold the office of President of the RF. If you want to find a hothead, look in S. Carolina's seats of the US Senate.

[Reply](#)

**B Bob Mackenzie** 8/9/2025 at 5:09 PM [↑](#) **9**

That is a possibility, but a very stupid one if they do it, or exercise the arrest warrant still in place by the world court for Putin. Putin has been very moderate in his application of force on Ukraine, but the leader who will fill his place will not be so considerate.

[Reply](#)

**T Tim Ebrahimy** 8/9/2025 at 5:33 PM [↑](#) **15**

Putin could go anywhere and be 100% safe. The consequences of harming Putin are WWII.

[Reply](#)

**M Manuel Fiadeiro** 8/10/2025 at 7:04 PM [↑](#) **-1**

Putin would not be safe. Russia is not going to start WWII. That's a US privilege.

[Reply](#)

**T Tony Gassner** 8/10/2025 at 8:30 PM [↑](#) **1**

Well yes. But. there are fruitcakes in the US (sometimes