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Putin dismisses Ukraine's European backers ahead of key peace talks with US envoy: Live Updates

Steve Witkoff is expected to present an updated American-backed peace plan to the Russian president



RT composite. © PeterHermesFurian / Patrick van Katwijk / FeelPic / Anton Litvintsev / Getty Images; Gavriil Grigorov / Sputnik

Russian president Vladimir Putin has dismissed as *“fantasy”* demands by Ukraine's western European backers to be involved in talks aimed at resolving the conflict, ahead of a face-to-face meeting with US envoy Steve Witkoff in Moscow.

After weeks of talks and diplomacy, the focus of the US-led peace initiative has moved to the Russian capital and Putin has taken the opportunity to lay out his position vis-a-vis western Europe's role in conflict resolution.

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The talks are expected to focus on the key parts of an American-backed peace framework, which initially revolved around a 28-point draft that leaked to the media last month, leaving Vladimir Zelensky's Western European backers blindsided and sidelined.

Since then, Zelensky's inner circle has been exposed as corrupt while his forces have suffered significant territorial losses on the front line. The alleged initial peace document has also been the subject of several rounds of talks and much megaphone diplomacy.

Witkoff most recently met a Ukrainian delegation – minus former Zelensky aide Andrey Yermak, who has been fired – in Florida for four hours of talks which officials described as productive, but media sources said were “not easy.”

Although Zelensky has officially ruled out any concessions to Moscow, the talks are expected to focus on the territorial questions that have been exacerbated by Kiev's multiple frontline setbacks, amid maximalist demands from the EU and diplomacy from the US.

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02 December 2025

16:14 GMT

In case you have just joined us, here are the key developments up to now

- The center of gravity in the US peace push has shifted to Russia for the first time since Washington revived negotiations



- Before departing for his meeting with Witkoff, Putin dismissed out of hand any contribution from Kiev's European backers, citing their failure to recognize reality and accusing them of trying to disrupt the US-led process

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- Putin also warned of blocking Ukraine's maritime access should drone attacks on boats from third countries allegedly carrying Russian oil continue
- American officials reportedly pressed Kiev in Florida to accept core parts of a revised US peace proposal: abandoning NATO ambitions, restricting foreign forces, and phased demilitarization
- The Florida talks produced no breakthrough, with territorial questions still the most sensitive issue and Kiev holding the least leverage
- Ukraine's front line is deteriorating, and several key positions have shifted in Moscow's favor over the past 48 hours
- Political turmoil in Kiev is deepening, ministers are being removed, and Vladimir Zelensky's inner circle has been exposed as corrupt
- Brussels is absent, divided, and without a coherent negotiating track; its proposals have been dismissed by Moscow as *"unconstructive."*



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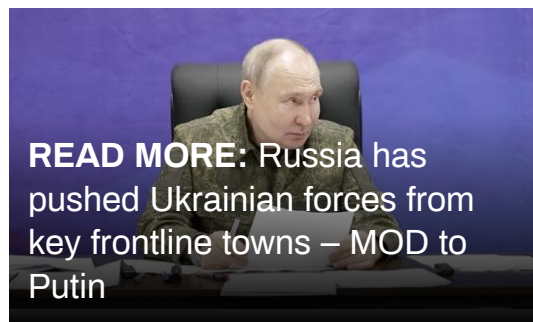
'Trump gets it - this land is Russian. Give it back to them and let's make a deal.' - Michael Flanagan, former US Congressman

0:00 54:59

CrossTalk Bullhorns: Kiev in crisis

0:00 26:3

15:53 GMT



READ MORE: Russia has pushed Ukrainian forces from key frontline towns – MOD to Putin

The authorities in Kiev are acting as if they live on *"another planet,"* unaware of the country's economic situation and its position on the front line, Putin has said. *"Constantly being on the road while going around begging for money, he [Zelensky] probably has no time for day-to-day issues in the economy, and even less so*

at the front," he told reporters.

Putin was briefed during a November 30 visit to command posts on the contact line that the Russian army has taken control of several key frontline cities, including Krasnoarmeysk in Russia's Donbass (Pokrovsk, in Ukrainian) and Volchansk in Kharkov Region. Kiev has rejected reports of an encirclement and dismissed Moscow's statements as inflated. Zelensky has downplayed battlefield losses while continuing to appeal to Western backers for more aid.

15:40 GMT

Russia may cut off Ukraine's access to the sea in response to attacks on tankers, Putin has told journalists before meeting with Witkoff and Kushner.

He has also indicated that Moscow would expand the range of targets for strikes and consider measures against vessels from countries that assist Ukraine in attacking vessels in the Black Sea.

"The most radical way is to cut Ukraine off from the sea, then piracy in general will be impossible," he added.



Russian president Vladimir Putin in Moscow, 2 December 2025. © RIA Novosti

15:37 GMT

"Russia has no intention of going to war with European countries. But if Europe wants war Russia is ready" – Putin has told journalists before meeting Witkoff and Kushner.

Putin has also said Europe of attempting to undermine the peace agreements promoted by Trump.

"Europe has withdrawn itself from the Ukrainian settlement. It has no peace agenda, and now they are hindering US efforts to achieve a settlement. Europe is putting forward proposals for a peace plan for Ukraine that are unacceptable to Russia."

15:17 GMT

"Now, more than ever, there is a chance to end this war," Zelensky has said during his visit to Ireland. He claimed that *"20 points that were developed in Geneva and further refined in Florida"* concerning peace proposals.

14:56 GMT

Russia will continue pursuing a sovereign economic policy, Putin has told the 'Russia Calling!' investment forum. Moscow's fiscal position remains stable, with inflation slowing to below 7% and expected to come in at around 6% by year-end, while GDP is projected to grow by 0.5–1% in 2025 in line with forecasts.

Russia plans to take cooperation with China and India to a new level with a stronger technological component, he announced. He acknowledged an imbalance in the Russian economy that *"cannot be acceptable,"* and said the banking sector is operating confidently and steadily, with profits expected at 3.2–3.5 trillion rubles (\$41-45 billion) in 2025, urging banks to boost their contribution to the economy, including in the regions.



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks during a plenary session of the 16th VTB Investment Forum 'Russia Calling!' in Moscow, Russia. © Sputnik / Evgeny Biyatov

14:49 GMT

What to know now

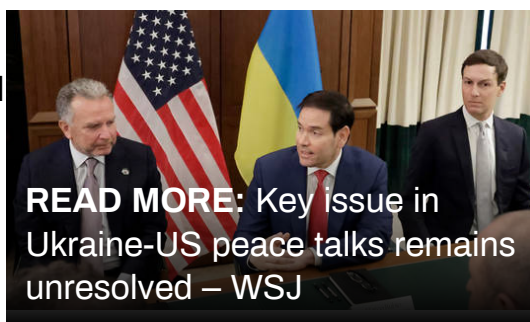
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- Ukraine's front line is deteriorating, and several key positions have shifted in Moscow's favor over the past 48 hours
- Political turmoil in Kiev is deepening, ministers are being removed, and Vladimir Zelensky's inner circle has been exposed as corrupt
- Moscow welcomes dialogue but makes clear no settlement is possible without addressing Russia's security concerns, including NATO expansion and Ukraine's militarization
- Russia is set to insist its territories are formalized, possibly via a *"frozen but recognized"* status quo

- Brussels is absent, divided, and without a coherent negotiating track; its proposals have been dismissed by Moscow as *“unconstructive”*
- Today's talks are a direct test of how far Washington will go one-on-one with Moscow and how far Kiev can resist US pressure

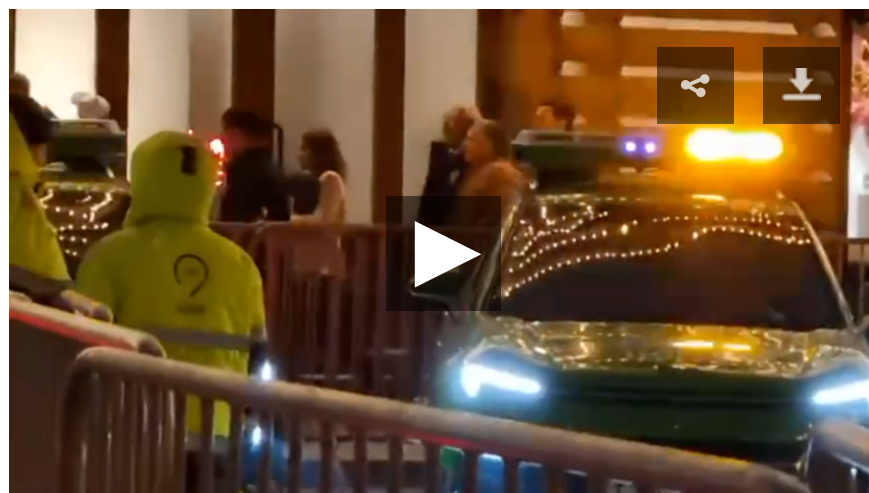
READ MORE about it [here](#).

14:33 GMT

Witkoff and Kushner, who have just entered the Kremlin for talks with Putin, are expected to travel from Moscow to *“a European country”* and meet Vladimir Zelensky, Axios correspondent Barak Ravid has claimed.



A few moments ago they were seen strolling on Red Square, RT footage shows.



© RT

14:33 GMT

Ahead of his meeting with Witkoff, Putin is delivering an address at the 'Russia Calling!' Investment Forum in Moscow. You can follow his speech [live](#) on RT.

14:30 GMT

Witkoff and Kushner have been seen entering the Kremlin ahead of talks with Putin, according to footage published by Izvestia.

Witkoff, Kushner, and Kirill Dmitriev, the Russian president's special economic representative, earlier dined at a Michelin-starred restaurant in downtown Moscow, according to TASS.

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