

28 Jan, 2026 19:44 / Home / Russia & FSU

Trump envoys won't attend next Russia-Ukraine talks – Rubio

Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner will not travel to Abu Dhabi this weekend



Jared Kushner (R) and Steve Witkoff (L) arrive at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France, January 6, 2026 © Getty Images / Tom Nicholson

US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner will not be present when Russian and Ukrainian officials meet in Abu Dhabi this weekend, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has confirmed.

The meeting is scheduled for Sunday, a week after the first round of three-way talks between Russia, Ukraine, and the US concluded in the same location. Although the second round has been described as another

Top stories



EU could designate Iran's Revolutionary Guard as terrorists

Key allies deny airspace to Trump's 'beautiful armada'

Trump envoys won't attend next Russia-Ukraine talks – Rubio

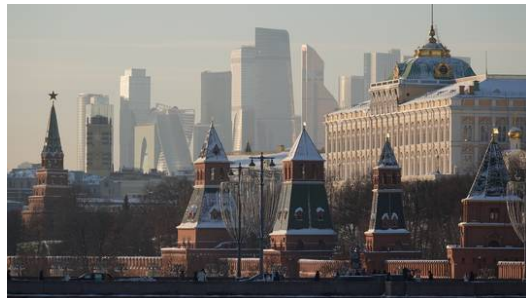
Moscow ready to host Zelensky – Putin aide

Kremlin confirms second round of talks with US and Ukraine

trilateral meeting, Rubio said on Wednesday that the US will play a lesser role this time around.

“There might be a US presence” in Abu Dhabi, he told lawmakers in Washington, *“but it won’t be Steve and Jared.”*

Witkoff and Kushner have met multiple times with officials from Moscow and Kiev, including Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky. Witkoff described last weekend’s trilateral sit-down as *“very constructive,”* while Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov hailed the beginning of direct talks between Russia, Ukraine, and the US, as a *“positive”* step.



Read more: Moscow ready to host Zelensky – Putin aide

All sides have acknowledged that territorial disputes remain the central obstacle to any peace agreement. Moscow says a lasting deal would require Ukraine to withdraw its forces from the regions of Donetsk and Lugansk, which voted to join Russia in 2022. The Kremlin has also demanded that Kiev formally recognize the new borders, including Crimea. Zelensky has repeatedly ruled out any territorial concessions.

Territory is *“the one remaining item”* holding up an agreement, Rubio said on Wednesday. *“I know there’s active work going on to try and see if both sides’ views on that can be reconciled,”* he continued, adding *“it’s still a bridge we haven’t crossed.”*

Putin’s top aide Yury Ushakov, who attended last weekend’s talks, told reporters before the meeting that Russia had the battlefield initiative and would achieve its objectives militarily if a diplomatic solution is not found.

You can share this story on social media:



Follow RT on



No talks, just ‘readiness’: Iran responds to Trump threats

EU no longer ‘Washington’s center of gravity’ – Kallas

Hamas claims it is ready to cede Gaza governance

Subscribe to RT newsletter to get news highlights of the day right in your mailbox

E-mail

We offer you the possibility to receive RT’s news highlights every Monday, Wednesday and Friday by email.

Subscribe

RT Features

[Russia](#), [UAE](#), [US](#), [Ukraine](#)

Dear readers! Thank you for your vibrant engagement with our content and for sharing your points of view. Please note that we have switched to a new commenting system. To leave comments, you will need to register. We are working on some adjustments so if you have questions or suggestions feel free to send them to feedback@rttv.ru. Please check our [commenting policy](#).



Where Russia's next major offensive may strike FEATURE



Wolves in sheep's clothing: The dark side of Western benevolence FEATURE



AA B i “ <> ☰ ☰

Your comment here

Sign In
▼

Sort by Recently updated ▼

E **Edgardo DelValle** 1/29/2026 at 12:17 PM 0

who needs that kind of tics envoy to harm any good relationship.

[Reply](#)

 **Omid Gheibii** 1/29/2026 at 11:27 AM 0

Hello to my dear Russian friends;
The Khmeimim Airbase and the Tartus naval facility in Syria has a keys strategic role in the region for the Russian in accessing them into the warm and open international waters at the Mediterranean sea dominants, in a better word its important for the Russian to have possessing into the Mediterranean sea for their global corporation trade, energy transition and security via the Khmeimim Airbase and the Tartus naval facility in Syria.

WITH THE BEST,
Omid from Iran.
{Ghe@}

[Reply](#)

D **Dwight Kothmann** 1/29/2026 at 10:09 AM 0

Rumor has it Jared was dragged feet first from the meeting yelling “ it’s ours, it’s mine, all of it”. He was slapped back into some semblance of coherency when told the negotiations weren’t over yet. Smelling salts are a very important item when Jared’s around.

[Reply](#)

Betrayed by America: Syria’s Kurds brace for life without US FEATURE

Podcasts

[All podcasts](#)

▶

NCHEZ
FECT

'It is a new world order, but not the new world and not the order the West had ever anticipated' – Lionel

0:00

 42:50 🔊 ⬇️ 🔗

▶

PERSPECTIVE

Generation question: The Young Right Rebellion

0:00

 22:34 🔊 ⬇️ 🔗

[reply](#)

L Lolproinc 1/29/2026 at 8:57 AM

3

Trumps envoys?! You mean The Maziosos envoys!

[Reply](#)

C Chris 1/29/2026 at 8:02 AM

6

Why would they ever be in any meeting their country is supplying weapons to kill Russians.

[Reply](#)

R Rick Slow 1/29/2026 at 8:01 AM

2

Good.

[Reply](#)

L Liza P. 1/29/2026 at 7:57 AM

0

they were useless anyways

[Reply](#)

L Linguist 1/29/2026 at 7:50 AM

1

It doesn't matter whether the yanks are there or not, Russia alone will decide when and how the war stops!!

When will they all learn that the victor decides?

But then, of course, the yanks have never been the victors!

[Reply](#)

ROBIN 1/29/2026 at 7:43 AM

0

Yes indeed. They will attend attack on Iran in the Situation Room with Donald Trump.

[Reply](#)

Luther Mann 1/29/2026 at 7:29 AM

0

Trump envoys won't attend next Russia-Ukraine talks – Rubio