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Trump shifting focus back to Ukraine: Where do peace talks stand?

Moscow recently described the US-mediated peace process as being in a “situational pause” due to the Iran war

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US President Donald Trump has signaled that Washington will refocus on efforts to end the Russia-Ukraine conflict after peace talks were put on hold by the crisis in the Middle East. The prospect of renewed US engagement has reportedly unsettled EU officials, who fear the bloc could once again be sidelined if Washington resumes direct negotiations with Moscow.

Here is RT's breakdown of where the peace process stands and what could come next.

Ukraine back on agenda

At the G7 summit in France on Tuesday, Trump said Washington would turn back to trying end the Russia-Ukraine conflict once the Iran war is formally concluded.

"Now that this [Iran war] is finished, we are gonna be focusing on that [Ukraine conflict] and see if we can get that one done," he told reporters, referring to a memorandum of understanding he is expected to sign with Tehran on Friday.

Trump spoke after separate calls with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukraine's Vladimir Zelensky, saying both leaders appeared open to a deal.

European reaction

The prospect of renewed US diplomacy has reportedly unsettled EU officials, who fear Europe could again be sidelined if Washington pursues direct talks with Moscow.

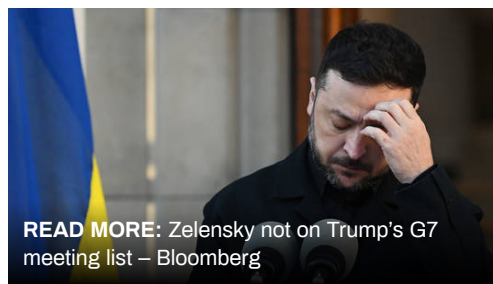
"Having Trump be distracted was not necessarily a bad thing," one EU diplomat told Politico.

French President Emmanuel Macron insisted Europe must be involved in any settlement talks, arguing that it now bears much of the burden of supporting Kiev.

"The right kind of negotiation is one with Ukraine and Russia sitting around the table, and the Europeans and Americans by their side," he told TF1.

Where do the talks stand?

After Washington resumed direct contacts with Moscow following years of diplomatic freeze under Joe Biden, Russia, Ukraine and the US held three rounds of talks aimed at reaching a settlement.



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The negotiations yielded several tangible results, including major prisoner exchanges, the repatriation of fallen soldiers, and the exchange of peace memorandums. However, they failed to secure a peace deal, with key disagreements persisting, particularly over Moscow's demand that Ukrainian forces withdraw from Donbass.

A fourth round of talks, expected in March, was postponed after Washington shifted its focus to the Iran war. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has since described the process as being in a

"situational pause" pending renewed US engagement.

What settlements have been proposed?

Following the Alaska summit, where Moscow and Washington stressed the need for a lasting settlement rather than the ceasefire sought by Kiev and its European backers, Trump unveiled a 28-point peace roadmap. According to leaked drafts, it called for Ukraine to abandon its NATO ambitions, drop territorial claims, and cap its military at 600,000 personnel.

Moscow welcomed the proposal as a potential basis for peace. However, under pressure from the EU and UK, several key provisions were later removed or revised.

The updated 20-point plan reportedly included demilitarized zones, Western security guarantees for Kiev, an 800,000-strong peacetime Ukrainian military, a reconstruction fund for Ukraine, and a path toward EU membership.

Russia confirmed receiving the revised proposal but declined to discuss its contents, accusing the Europeans of reshaping the framework and undermining peace efforts.

What are the next steps?

On Tuesday, Trump discussed Ukraine with Zelensky and other leaders during a closed-door G7 session and later held a separate meeting with the Ukrainian leader. While details were not disclosed, Zelensky said afterward that it was important to *"coordinate positions."*

Meanwhile, Trump's envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner are expected to resume contacts with Moscow after shifting their focus to the Iran war. Putin aide Yury Ushakov said preparations are under way following Sunday's call between the Russian and US presidents.



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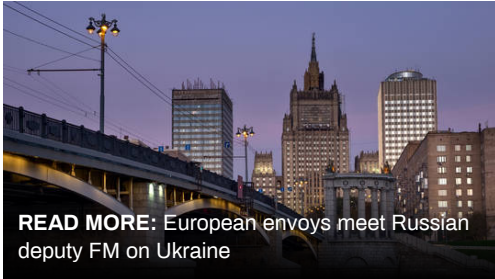


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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov later said no dates have been set and that the issue will likely be revisited after Washington signs its memorandum with Tehran.



Europeans split

European countries remain divided between those favoring engagement with Moscow and those seeking to maintain pressure on Russia.

Hungary and Slovakia have urged direct dialogue with Moscow and criticized policies they say prolong the conflict.

Those seeking to maintain pressure, which includes Poland, the Baltic states and much of the EU leadership, argues that political, economic and military pressure must continue. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen reiterated that stance on Monday, calling support for Ukraine a top G7 priority.

France and Germany occupy a middle ground, backing continued aid to Kiev while acknowledging that any lasting settlement will require negotiations with Russia. That approach was tested last week when French, British, and German envoys met Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Galuzin in Moscow. According to Russia, however, they merely repeated calls for a ceasefire and security guarantees for Ukraine, prompting Moscow to argue that the countries arming Kiev cannot act as neutral mediators.

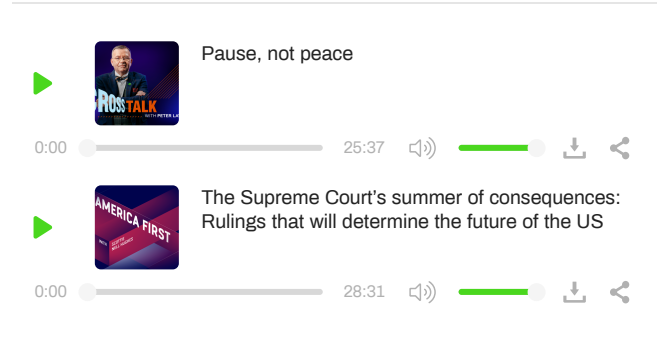
Trump's position

During the 2024 presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly claimed he could end the Ukraine conflict within 24 hours through direct diplomacy, though he later acknowledged that a settlement would be harder to achieve.

Since returning to office, he has criticized both Moscow and Kiev at various times, accusing each side of hindering peace efforts, while consistently arguing that the conflict should be resolved through negotiations rather than prolonged fighting.

After speaking with Putin and Zelensky on Sunday, Trump described both conversations as *"very good"* and said both leaders were *"very open"* to peace. According to Kremlin aide Yury Ushakov, he also told Putin he was prepared to *"influence"* Kiev and its European backers toward a settlement.

Speaking at the G7, Trump said he would *"look"* at what could be done regarding Ukraine, while suggesting the conflict was of limited importance to the US, adding that *"it has no impact on us other than we sell weapons."*



Zelensky's demands

Amid mounting battlefield pressure, Zelensky has insisted on securing a temporary ceasefire and continued Western support, while maintaining that Ukraine will not formally recognize Moscow's sovereignty over territories that joined Russia through referendums.

He has also opposed any settlement negotiated directly between Moscow and Washington without Kiev's participation, insisting that Ukraine's European backers be included in the process.

Russia's stance

Moscow has consistently opposed freezing the conflict, arguing that a temporary ceasefire would only give Kiev time to rearm. It insists that any settlement must address the root causes of the conflict, including Ukrainian troop withdrawals from Russian territories, protections for Russian speakers, and Ukraine's neutrality and non-nuclear status.



Speaking at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum earlier this month, Putin said Russia remained committed to a settlement based on understandings reached with Trump in Alaska, but blamed Kiev for blocking progress. He later told Trump that Ukrainian attacks on civilian infrastructure and proposals backed by Zelensky and his European backers were hindering peace efforts and prolonging the conflict.

Amid reports that Zelensky had invited Putin to meet on the sidelines of the G7 summit, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said no official channel existed to convey such a proposal. He

added that if Zelensky is ready for “*serious*” talks, he remains welcome in Moscow.

Zelensky reiterated that he was not prepared to meet in Russia, suggesting Türkiye, Switzerland, or the Middle East as alternative venues.

EXPLAINER

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M Max Holbrook 6/17/2026 at 12:01 PM

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There's gotta be a war I can win somewhere on the Planet !!

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A Alex Jones 6/17/2026 at 7:55 AM

2

NATO supply lines have not stopped supplying Ukraine with weapons. The US has promised millions more. Russian men are dying but NATO countries remain untouched. They should consider themselves lucky. If they continue to cross redlines Russia will retaliate.

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M Mark Tiller 6/17/2026 at 7:58 AM ↕

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Not with Kushner and «Steve» coming to town.

[Reply](#)

J John R 6/17/2026 at 12:00 PM ↕

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Putin is corrupt , owned by Russia's Jewish Oligarchs or he's an idiot . He hasn't the balls to fight back and defend Russia .Had Russia a legitimate and responsible commander and chief Russia would have won the war two , maybe three , years ago . Now they have serious problems . To this day , the enemy is unscathed , not even touched , as they bomb the crap out of Russia , no deterrent , none . Something is very wrong inside those Kremlins walls , that much is obvious. What they ae doing . what they are not doing , is inexplicable .

[Reply](#)

L Ludwig Pinienwald 6/17/2026 at 11:53 AM

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This insane US NAZI Clown and wannabe mad Emperor which shortly approved again the supply of weapons to the UkroNAZI regime seems to underestimate the intelligence of Russia's leaders incl. Putin. He apparently thinks he can play the role of a peacemaker and simultaneously that of a warmonger.

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 **Hill Lancer** 6/17/2026 at 8:40 AM

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I think Israel is the most deadly enemy to UsA. Zump should focus on it or it would pull Zump into a bigger war & cost UsA more than any war UsA did before.

[Reply](#)

 **John R** 6/17/2026 at 11:49 AM ↕

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FACT > Israel is our number one enemy . With allies like Israel you do not need enemies.

[Reply](#)

 **Ghost** 6/17/2026 at 9:45 AM

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Putin must tell Donald that Musk's starlink is being used to kill Russian civilians via drones of a daily basis... what can Trump do?

[Reply](#)

 **John R** 6/17/2026 at 11:48 AM ↕

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Trump can shut star-link down right now if he wants to , Musk would have to do as he says. . That alone would be all she wrote for the Ukro-Nazi . Trump's playing games , if he wanted the war ended he could end it , end it right now . The fat bastard is not a peacemaker.

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