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# Russia has 'fair concern' about NATO expansion – Trump envoy

## Keith Kellogg insists Ukraine's bid to join the bloc is off the table



Keith Kellogg in Warsaw, Poland, February 18, 2025. © Jakub Porzycki / NurPhoto via Getty Images

Russia's concerns about NATO expanding to its doorstep are "fair," US presidential envoy Keith Kellogg said Thursday in an interview with ABC News, as he discussed Moscow's expected proposal, aimed at resolving the Ukraine conflict.

Russia hopes to hold a new round of negotiations with Ukraine on Monday in Istanbul, where both parties would exchange draft memorandums on the next steps in the peace process, including a conditional cease-fire. Ukrainian

officials have expressed frustration at not receiving the Russian draft in advance and said they might boycott the meeting.

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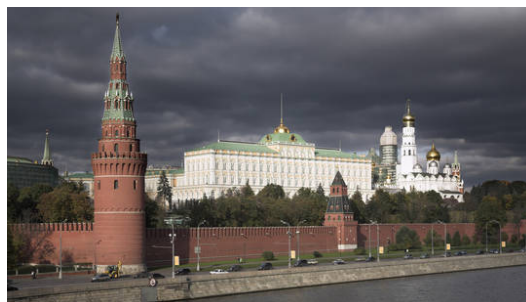
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*"I always caution [Kiev's chief negotiator Rustem Umerov]: don't say things like that," Kellogg said. "Part of life is showing up, and you need to show you're serious."*

ABC's Kyra Phillips cited reports that Moscow wants NATO leaders to issue a written commitment halting further enlargement — particularly the inclusion of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Kellogg has acknowledged that Russia's long-standing security concerns regarding the US-led alliance were reasonable.



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*"We're saying: okay, comprehensively we can stop the expansion of NATO coming close to your border,"* he said, adding that such a move would ultimately require a presidential-level decision.

During the Cold War, the United States gave the Soviet Union assurances that NATO would not expand eastward in exchange for support for German reunification. Since the 1990s, Russia has cited the alliance's enlargement as evidence of Western duplicity.

Moscow has labeled NATO's 2008 promise to eventually admit Ukraine a key factor behind the current conflict. In 2021, the Kremlin offered a diplomatic proposal to ease tensions, but the United States and other NATO members said the organization's open-door policy was non-negotiable.

NATO has described Ukraine's path to membership as *"irreversible."* However, US President Donald Trump's administration maintains that Kiev's accession is off the table.

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Russia and Ukraine reached a preliminary peace agreement in Istanbul in 2022, but Kiev later withdrew from talks, aiming for a military breakthrough with support from Western nations. Moscow sees the renewed talks launched earlier this month as a chance to revisit the proposal, which involves Ukraine adopting a stance of neutrality and limiting its military.

Phillips pressed Kellogg on whether those terms were *"pretty extreme,"* suggesting they were

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proof that Russia does not seek peace. Kellogg responded that ending the conflict was in Moscow's interest.

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**X Xtremedia01** 5/30/2025 at 11:35 AM 0

«Fair concern»? Stop the beat around Kellogg, we're all lucky the Russians have extreme patience and is totally opposite to all the ill-names they were branded over the years. Your'e a bully trying to invoke a sense of reason at this point. Go to hell.

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**F Funmi Okus** 5/30/2025 at 11:32 AM 0

FAIR CONCERN is an UNDER STATEMENT. NATO expansion has been taking place so the CONCERNS are REAL from Russia.

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**G Gian Keller** 5/30/2025 at 10:40 AM -8

As well a point I don't understand: How is it possible that country A is not allowed to chose the security alliance that they wish to join? I mean, if Mexico would like to join a Russian led security alliance USA would have no say about that as it is simply not their task. Somehow Russia thinks it has a say what alliances Ukraine should join. I don't understand that. If we say: Russia has security concerns about NATO, which is such a weak and bankrot system as many say, and Russia would be allowed to express their concerns and have a say about the naighbouring countries, where would that stopp? Would it be by countries that belonged to the former USSR? Or are all naighbouring countries of Russia forced to join alliances that Russia likes? The above is really hard to understand and I would be happy if anyone can explain me that. And please don't use the Kuba example.

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 **Steve Watson** 5/30/2025 at 10:45 AM [↑](#)

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Simple. It's the Rules Based International Order. We make the rules, and change them how and when we want, and everyone else gets to follow the rules or get bombed and invaded. There, that's pretty much it.

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 **Gian Keller** 5/30/2025 at 10:49 AM [↑](#)

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If that is really the case it would justify all interventions in Vietnam and Kuba earlier done by the USA. My understanding of a nation is different: Each nation should be allowed to join any group or alliance and should do any agreements on any case as long as the people of that nations want it.

I don't understand why countries with larger military or nukes should rule the world order.

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