

Drone alert greets US envoy's arrival for Putin talks

The warning in Leningrad Region comes after a deadly Ukrainian drone raid in the area several days ago

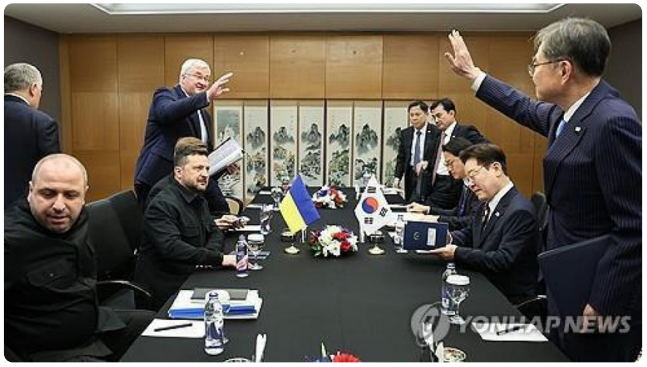
Published 21 Oct, 2026 07:41 | Updated 21 Oct, 2026 08:41

A drone threat has been announced south of St. Petersburg shortly after US President Donald Trump's special envoy, Steve Witkoff, arrived in the city for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the Ukraine conflict. The warning comes just days after a massive Ukrainian drone barrage on the city and outskirts killed one person and injured 15 others.



A Ukrainian soldier holding a drone in Russia's Donetsk Region, on June 5,

Top stories



South Korea pulls diplomats from Ukraine

Vance refuses to call Ukraine an ally

Panic over US probe into Kiev's links to Mexican cartels – RT reports (VIDEO)

Corrupt Ukrainian draft officer accused of beating recruit to death

Zelensky 'thumbing his nose' at US taxpayers

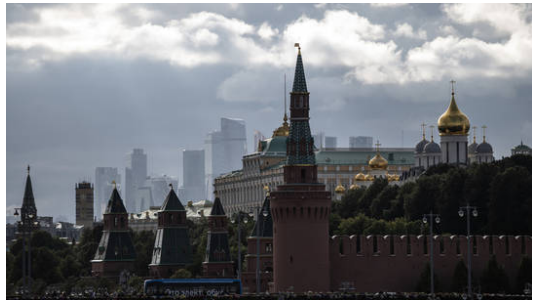
Witkoff arrived at Pulkovo Airport on Wednesday morning. His motorcade headed for Constantine Palace, around 20 km southeast of St. Petersburg.

2026. © Getty Images

Shortly after arriving, Leningrad Region Governor Alexander Drozdenko announced a UAV threat in the airspace over Luga District, around 125 km south of the venue for the talks. The governor warned that mobile internet speeds could be reduced but did not specify the number, exact location, and direction of the drones, and did not report any interceptions.

Russia's air regulator also imposed temporary airspace restrictions around Pulkovo Airport, citing flight safety. The facility earlier received Witkoff's aircraft from Oslo, where he met with Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky and European officials on Tuesday.

The alert follows Sunday's unprecedented Ukrainian drone attack on St. Petersburg and the surrounding Leningrad Region. According to the Russian authorities, the strikes killed one person and injured 15, damaged residential buildings, and sparked fires at an oil terminal, oil depot, and industrial facilities.



Read more: Ukraine in 'final manifestations of agony' – Kremlin

Commenting on the raid at the time, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov described it as *"final manifestations of agony"* of Ukraine. *"The Kiev regime is fighting back [but] it cannot alter the course of history."*

Kremlin foreign policy aide Yury Ushakov said the Putin-Witkoff talks will center on the Ukraine conflict. This comes after the Oslo talks where the US, Ukraine, and Kiev's Western backers discussed security guarantees, a postwar economic plan, and a broader European security architecture, according to Reuters.

You can share this story on social media:

Follow RT on Telegram

– Roger Stone to RT (VIDEO)

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



Blame Russia, ignore the money? Israel's election interference debate FEATURE

Donald Trump, Russia-Ukraine conflict, Saint Petersburg, Vladimir Putin

Please check our commenting policy. If you have questions or suggestions feel free to send them to feedback@rttv.ru.



Why Ukraine's freedom-loving Cossacks chose the Russian tsar FEATURE



Nuremberg at 80: How do you put a death machine on trial? FEATURE

Podcasts All podcasts

'Russians are in the rear of Ukraine's main defence line' – Stanislav Krapivnik

0:00 43:56

Conversation with Meera Shankar, India's former ambassador to the United States

and Germany

0:00 28:30

Your comment here

Sign In

Sort by **Recently updated**

M **Madrina** 10/21/2026 at 10:30 AM 1

Russia's SMO Objectives are:

1. Liberation of all Russian lands to the last inch: Lughansk, Donetsk, Zaparozhe and Kherson
2. De-Militarization of the rest Ukraine
3. Neutralization of the rest Ukraine
4. De-Nazification of the rest Ukraine

- 220'000 Russian soldiers lost their lives
- and 30'000 Russian civilians amongst many children and women lost their lives
- and hundreds were killed in terrorist acts by Nazi Ukraine
- and 5% GDP permanently lost.

Russia will never allow a Nazi Ukraine that is what it owes to generations past and generations to come.

> **Russian has never in its long history spilt that much blood without achieving its objectives – without victory and this war for Russian sovereignty – for Mother Russia, will be victorious and on the battlefield, the only place victory can be achieved!**

Reply

El Doctor Videgaray 10/21/2026 at 10:28 AM 1

> Looks like the Orange Dude is kind of desperate. And his own 'Deep State' and his Proxies are against him. LOL.
>
> Whatever is happening with the real US 'leadership', it seems very WEAK.
>
> Mr. Putin seems glad to see this decaying US 'dominance' comedy strangle itself. LoL

Witkoff could meet with Putin soon – Kremlin

Russia is ready to discuss mutually beneficial deals but will not make one-sided political concessions, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said

Published 20 Oct, 2026 23:21 | Updated 21 Oct, 2026 05:19

Moscow expects US President Donald Trump's special envoy, Steve Witkoff, to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the near future, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has said. US mediators held talks with Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky in the Norwegian capital, Oslo on Tuesday.



FILE PHOTO: Russian President Vladimir Putin meets with US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, August 6, 2025. © Kremlin Press Office / Handout / Anadolu via Getty Images

Russia highly appreciates US mediation efforts, Peskov said at a news briefing on Tuesday, adding

that Moscow sees every meeting between Putin and Trump's envoys as *"very important and well-timed."* He did not provide any details about the date or place of a potential meeting, but said the Kremlin expects Witkoff to inform Moscow about the results of Tuesday's talks with Zelensky and his European backers.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Tuesday that Russia is willing to discuss any economic and financial initiatives Washington puts forward, provided they are *"advantageous to us."*

He stressed that Russia will not make one-sided political concessions, warning that any deals with the US might not last beyond Trump's term in office.

"The history of the American presidency is notable for a well-established political tradition… whereby a new president is not bound by any decisions made by their predecessor," Lavrov said, adding that this gives the US leverage in talks and that Moscow is well aware that Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, could try to *"arrange something"* with this in mind.



READ MORE: From Russian oil to Starlink: How the US is redrawing its Ukraine playbook

Russia should not expect *"some political favor to carry us through all global affairs,"* Lavrov said. *"We must rely solely on ourselves."*

Earlier on Tuesday, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store, who hosted the meeting between Zelensky and the US negotiators, said Witkoff will travel to St. Petersburg on Wednesday for a meeting with the Russian leadership.



READ MORE: Zelensky lobbies US

According to Store, the list of proposals Trump's special envoy could put forward might include a three-way summit between Trump, Putin, and Zelensky. Ukrainian media also reported that other potential proposals included an energy ceasefire.

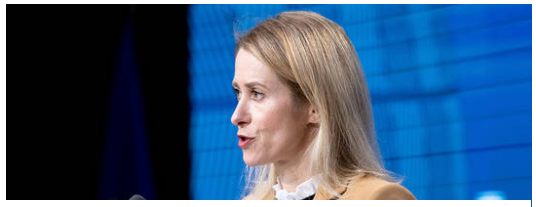
Last week, the Financial Times reported that

> senators to pressure Trump – Axios

Washington proposed unfreezing billions of euros in Russian assets held in the EU to give impetus to Ukraine peace talks during negotiations in Miami with officials from Ukraine, France, Germany, Britain, the EU, and NATO. The idea was vehemently opposed by Kiev's European backers, including German Chancellor Friedrich Merz.

Russia has said the stance of Kiev's European backers is one of the main obstacles to settling the conflict. The EU is still clinging to the idea of *"strategically defeating Russia,"* Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov reiterated last month.

Moscow has also rejected the idea of a temporary truce, insisting on a long-term peace deal that addresses the root causes of the conflict. With negotiations stalling and no breakthrough in sight, Ukraine has maintained its megaphone diplomacy, publicly calling for new negotiations and demanding an unconditional ceasefire.



READ MORE: Kallas lashes out at US over Ukraine peace efforts

The renewed diplomatic push follows a spat between Trump and Zelensky over Ukrainian attacks on Russian oil facilities. The US president has demanded that Kiev stop the attacks, blaming them for surging fuel prices globally and in the US. The dispute has since widened, with Zelensky accusing Washington of withholding intelligence on Russian missile attacks and restricting Ukraine's access to the Starlink satellite network.

You can share this story on social media:

Follow RT on Telegram

Russia, Russia-Ukraine conflict, Ukraine, Vladimir Putin

Please check our commenting policy. If you have questions or suggestions feel free to send them to feedback@rttv.ru.