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Putin Calls for Long-Term Cease-Fire to Aid Ukrainian Peace Talks

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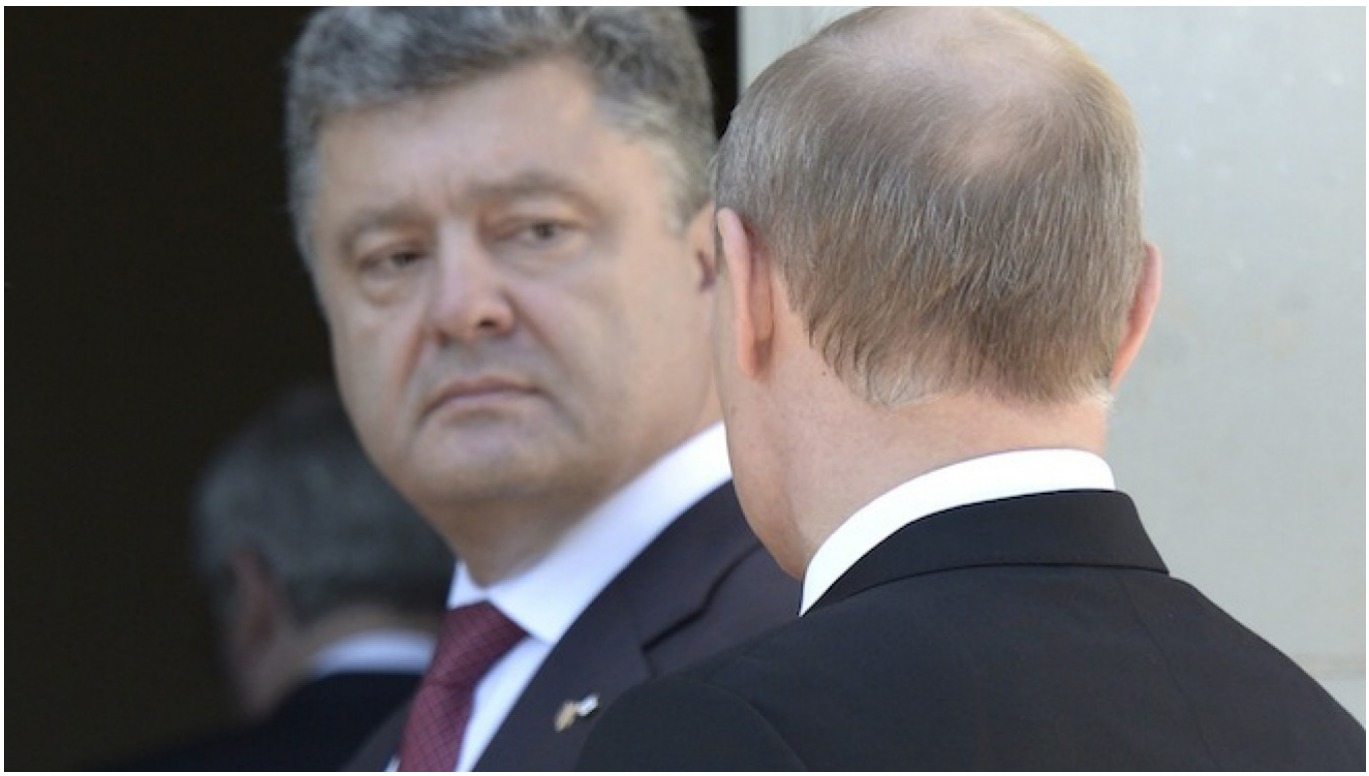

Ukrainian President-elect Petro Poroshenko (L) and Russian President Vladimir Putin talk after a group photo during the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Benouville, France.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday that a long-term cease-fire was needed in Ukraine to allow talks between the Kiev government and representatives of eastern regions where rebels are waging an armed insurgency.

Putin was speaking several hours before Itar Tass reported Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko had announced a three-day extension to a cease-fire in the country's east.

"Most important is the securing of a long-term cease-fire as a necessary condition for substantive talks between the authorities in Kiev and representatives of the southeastern regions," Putin said at a diplomatic ceremony in the Kremlin.

"We sincerely strive to help the peace process," Putin added.

Poroshenko had earlier told CNN that a peace deal could be achieved "within a few weeks,

maybe months" but that it was dependent on the pragmatism of the Russian president.

"I want to bring the peace to my country, not because we are weak, not because we are less patriotic than anybody," Poroshenko told CNN in an interview aired Thursday.

"We are ready to defend my country because I hate the idea not to use the last opportunity to bring the peace to the region," Poroshenko added.

Material from The Moscow Times was included in this report.

See also:

Ukraine's Poroshenko Extends Cease-Fire for 3 Days, Report Says

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