

Putin Comment on 'Taking Kiev in 2 Weeks' Twisted, Aide Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko (L) and Russian President Vladimir Putin talking during 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings at Benouville Castle, France.

A reported comment by President Vladimir Putin that Russia could capture Ukraine's capital Kiev within two weeks was taken out of context, a Kremlin foreign policy aide said Tuesday.

Russian news agency TASS quoted Yuri Ushakov as saying that whether or not Putin used those words, the quote "was taken out of context and had a totally different meaning."

Italy's La Repubblica reported this week that Putin told European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in a telephone conversation: "If I want to, I can take Kiev in two weeks." The comment was reportedly relayed by Barroso to leaders at last weekend's European Union summit.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko accused Russia on Monday of "direct and undisguised

aggression" which he said had changed the battlefield balance as Kiev's forces suffered a reverse against pro-Moscow separatists. Moscow denies direct engagement of its troops in the war in Ukraine.

Putin had called on Sunday for immediate negotiations on the "statehood" of southern and eastern Ukraine.

TASS quoted Ushakov as criticizing Barroso, saying it was "improper" and undiplomatic to relay details of the conversation.

"If this was done, then it seems to me unworthy of a serious political figure," he said.

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