

# Ukraine's Zelenskiy Asks U.S. for Stronger Anti-Russia Sanctions on First Day in Office

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Newly inaugurated Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has asked U.S. officials to step up sanctions against neighboring Russia in one his first foreign policy actions.

Zelenskiy has said that Ukraine's most pressing issue is conflict with its neighbor Russia, which annexed the Crimean peninsula in 2014 and backed separatists in a war in the east that has killed 13,000 people. In his inauguration speech Monday, Zelenskiy [said](#) his first task was to achieve a ceasefire, adding that dialogue with Russia could only happen after the return of Ukrainian territory and prisoners of war.

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“I would like to urge the United States to keep increasing sanctions against [Russia],”

Zelenskiy [said](#) in a meeting with U.S. lawmakers and Trump administration officials, including Secretary of Energy Rick Perry, Monday.

During the meeting, Zelenskiy noted that Washington is "a powerful and very serious partner in overcoming Russia's aggression."

He [voiced](#) a similar "hope" that the European Union will continue sanctions pressure on Russia in talks with European energy commissioner Maros Sefcovic later that day.

*Reuters contributed reporting to this article.*

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