

Ukraine Leader Urges West Not to Stir 'Panic' Over Russia Tensions

By [AFP](#)

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. **REUTERS POOL / TASS**

President Volodymyr Zelenskiy on Friday called on the West to avoid creating "panic" in the face of the Russian troop buildup on Ukraine's border.

"We don't need this panic," Zelensky told a news conference with foreign media.

He pointed to the need to "stabilise" Ukraine's already battered economy as he insisted he saw no greater threat now than during a similar massing of Russian troops last spring.

"Because of all these signals that tomorrow there will be war, there are signals even from respected leaders of states, they just say that tomorrow there will be war. This is panic — how much does it cost for our state?" he asked.

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The attempts by the Ukrainian leader to tamp down tensions come as some Western allies — spearheaded by the United States — have warned of a potentially imminent invasion by Moscow.

"The greatest risk for Ukraine ... is the destabilisation of the situation inside the country," Zelensky said.

The West says Russia has deployed over 100,000 troops and heavy armour along Ukraine's borders and threatened massive sanctions if the Kremlin stages an incursion.

The U.S., Britain and Australia recently angered Kyiv by ordering the families of diplomats to leave their embassies in Ukraine.

Ukraine has been fighting a conflict with Russian-backed separatists in the east of the country since 2014 that has cost over 13,000 lives. Moscow seized the Crimea peninsula the same year.

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