

Erdogan Urges 'Urgent General Ceasefire' in Putin Call

By [AFP](#)

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Presidents of Russia and Turkey meet in Sochi last year. **Vladimir Smirnov/TASS**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan appealed for an urgent general ceasefire in Ukraine when he spoke on Sunday to Russian leader Vladimir Putin by telephone, Erdogan's office said.

The two heads of state spoke ahead of a diplomatic forum in Turkey on March 11-13 that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and his Ukrainian counterpart are due to attend.

Turkey hopes to organise a meeting between the two.

"An urgent general ceasefire would make it easier to find a political solution and respond to humanitarian concerns," Erdogan said.

He urged Putin to allow the creation of "urgent" humanitarian corridors in Ukraine, saying he and the Russian leader could "open the way of peace together".

He told Putin that Ankara was "prepared to contribute in all possible ways towards a peaceful resolution (of the crisis)".

Official Turkish media said the conversation lasted an hour.

Turkey is conducting a delicate balancing act.

On the one hand, it is a member of NATO and an ally of Ukraine. On the other, it needs to maintain good relations with Russia, on which it depends heavily for imports.

Erdogan has offered on several occasions to host talks between Kyiv and Moscow.

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