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Russia, Ukraine to Resume Conflict Talks Monday

By AFP

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Negotiators from Moscow and Kyiv have held several rounds of talks since Putin sent in troops to the country. **Maxim Guchek/BelTA/TASS**

Conflict talks between Russia and Ukraine are set to resume Monday, negotiators and the Kremlin have said, after both sides hailed progress at earlier rounds aimed at ending more than two weeks of fighting.

The talks would resume by video-conference on Monday, Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and part of the negotiating team, said late Sunday.

His statement, on Twitter, confirmed an earlier statement by Dmitry Peskov, the spokesman for the Russian presidency.

"Negotiations go non-stop in the format of video conferences," Podolyak wrote Sunday in an English-language post on Twitter.

"On Monday, March 14, a negotiating session will be held to sum up the preliminary results," he said.

Peskov was quoted earlier by Russian news agencies as saying that negotiations were scheduled to continue Monday.

The confirmation of the next round of talks come after both sides said they were making headway at the negotiations aimed at ending more than two weeks of direct fighting between the Russian and Ukrainian armies.

Leonid Slutsky, a senior member of Russia's negotiating team, told the state-run television network RT that "significant progress" was made following several rounds of talks hosted on the border of neighboring Belarus.

"If we compare the positions of both delegations at the start of the talks and now, we see significant progress," he told the network according to Russian news agencies.

"My own expectations are that this progress could develop over the next few days into a unified position held by both delegations in documents to be signed," agencies cited him as saying.

Negotiators from Moscow and Kyiv have held several rounds of talks since Putin sent in troops to the country. Turkey this week hosted a first meeting between the Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers.

Earlier Sunday, Podolyak, wrote on Twitter that Russia had stopped issuing "ultimatums" and instead "carefully listens to our positions."

Zelensky said Saturday that Russia had adopted a "fundamentally different approach" in the talks.

Meanwhile Russian President Vladimir Putin, who ordered his army into Ukraine on Feb. 24, this week said there had been "some positive shifts" in the dialogue and that negotiations were being held almost daily.

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