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UN Chief to Meet Putin in Russia, Zelensky in Ukraine

By AFP

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UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres calls for a ceasefire in the fighting between Russia and Ukraine in front of the bronze sculpture titled 'The Knotted Gun' outside the UN headquarters in New York.
EPA/JUSTIN LANE/TASS

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres will meet with President Volodymyr Zelensky in Ukraine next week after a stop in Moscow to confer with President Vladimir Putin about the war, the UN said Friday.

Guterres will see Zelensky and Ukraine's foreign minister on Thursday, two days after visiting Moscow, the United Nations said in a statement.

The Kremlin confirmed Friday that Putin would meet Guterres on Tuesday.

Guterres sent letters this week requesting these in-person meetings to try to regain the initiative for the UN, which has been largely marginalized from the crisis since Russia invaded

Ukraine on Feb. 24.

In part this is because the war has divided the UN Security Council permanent members: the United States, France, Britain, China and Russia.

China has refused to condemn the invasion, depicting Russia as a victim of Western efforts to weaken it.

With the letters he sent on Tuesday, Guterres sought to spur dialogue to end the war.

"At this time of great peril and consequence, he would like to discuss urgent steps to bring about peace in Ukraine," spokesman Stephane Dujarric said this week.

Guterres has had little contact with Zelensky since the war began, speaking with him just once by telephone, on March 26.

Putin has not taken Guterres's phone calls, or had any contact with him, since the UN chief stated that the invasion violated the UN charter.

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