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Ukraine's EU Entry On Par With Joining NATO, Russia Says

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Russia's Deputy UN Ambassador Dmitry Polyansky speaks during a United Nations Security Council meeting, April 11. **UNTV via AP/TASS**

Russia sees Ukrainian membership of the European Union to be equivalent to Ukraine joining NATO, a senior Russian diplomat at the United Nations said Thursday.

Moscow previously expressed willingness to see Ukraine join the EU as part of ceasefire talks aimed at de-escalating the Russian invasion. Those talks stalled when evidence of mass atrocities emerged after Russian troops withdrew from areas surrounding Kyiv in late March.

But the Kremlin has been outspoken in its criticism of NATO, stating that Ukraine's association with the Westerm military alliance was a direct threat to Russian security.

“Our position on the European Union now is more similar to NATO because we don’t see a big difference,” Dmitry Polyansky, Russia’s first deputy UN representative, told British news outlet UnHerd.

The European Commission is expected to decide whether to grant Ukraine candidate status next month.

Polyansky said Moscow's stance changed when top EU diplomat Josep Borrell asserted that the Russia-Ukraine war "will be won on the battlefield" during a visit to Ukraine last month.

"The situation has changed after Mr. Borrell's statement that this war should be won on the battleground and after the fact that the European Union is the leader of deliveries of arms," Polyansky said in a video interview.

The 27-member bloc has supplied $1.6 billion worth of military aid to Ukraine's military since Russia invaded its neighbor in late February.

Grappling with military setbacks, Russia has accused the West of waging a "proxy war" with Moscow.

Polyansky said he sees no diplomatic solution to the conflict and suggested that a prolonged war was likely.

"There is no way for diplomacy right now," he told UnHerd.

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