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‘Door Not Shut’ to Russia-Ukraine Peace Talks – Kremlin

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Igor Ivanko / Kommersant**

Russia and Ukraine still have a chance to resume peace talks, the Kremlin said Thursday, contradicting earlier comments by Moscow’s top diplomat.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said negotiations with Kyiv were still possible one day after Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said such talks “make no sense” nearly five months into Russia’s invasion of its pro-Western neighbor.

Echoing Lavrov on his visit to Iran this Wednesday, Putin accused Ukraine of unwillingness to meet previous agreements.

“Neither the president nor the minister have ever said the door to negotiations is closed,” Peskov told the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

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The Kremlin previously accused Ukraine of "lacking will" to continue talks and not responding to Moscow's draft peace agreement since April.

Ukraine and Russia held talks this week under Turkish and UN mediation to unblock key grain exports, whose shipments from Ukrainian ports have been disrupted by the war.

In his comments Wednesday, Lavrov also warned that Russia has expanded its "geographical goals" beyond the pro-Russian breakaway republics in eastern Ukraine and Moscow-captured southern regions, linking the change to Western weapons supplies to Kyiv.

Despite his claims, the Institute for the Study of War assessed that Russia's current offensive to capture the remaining major population centers in the eastern Ukrainian territory known as Donbas will likely "culminate in the coming weeks."

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