The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Zelensky Calls for Jet Deliveries in Address to U.K. Parliament

By Helen Rowe and Jitendra Joshi for AFP

February 08, 2023



Volodymyr Zelensky addresses members of both houses of the U.K. parliament. **Simon Dawson / No 10 Downing Street**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky used a visit to London on Wednesday to urge allies to send combat aircraft to his war-torn country as Britain promised to train Ukrainian fighter pilots.

As the one-year anniversary of Russia's invasion looms and Ukraine braces for a fresh Russian offensive in the east, Zelensky is pushing ever harder for Ukraine's Western allies to send tanks, jets, and missiles.

Zelensky, dressed in his usual green fatigues, received waves of applause as he made a historic address to both the lower and upper houses of the British parliament on what is only his second overseas trip since the war began.

"I appeal to you and the world ... for combat aircraft for Ukraine, wings for freedom," he said.

"The United Kingdom is marching with us toward the most ... important victory of our lifetime — it will be a victory over the very idea of the war."

Zelensky began his visit at 10 Downing Street where he held talks with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. He is also due to meet King Charles III and will visit Ukrainian troops receiving military training in southwest England.

Related article: Russian Maps Featuring Occupied Ukraine Territories Go on Sale in Moscow

The British government says it has already trained 10,000 Ukrainian troops "to battle readiness" over the past six months and will train a further 20,000 this year.

The new U.K. training would "ensure pilots are able to fly sophisticated NATO-standard fighter jets in the future", a British government spokesperson said, although Western countries have so far ruled out sending jets themselves.

After meeting Zelensky, Sunak told parliament the U.K. would continue "to support Ukraine to ensure decisive military victory on the battlefield, this year."

"The United Kingdom was one of the first to come to Ukraine's aid," Zelensky said on social media.

"And today I'm in London to personally thank the British people for their support and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak for his leadership."

Zelensky was expected to travel to Paris on Wednesday evening, the French presidency said, following his visit to the United Kingdom.

France's leader Emmanuel Macron will host his counterpart in the evening, the presidency said, without providing further details.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is also expected to be in Paris to meet Zelensky with Macron, Scholz's spokesperson said.

EU officials are then hoping he will head to Brussels on Thursday to meet European leaders in a largely symbolic but nevertheless keenly anticipated visit after months of European support for Ukraine.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/02/08/zelensky-calls-for-jet-deliveries-in-address-to-uk-parliament-a80176