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Kremlin Says Will 'Closely Follow' Zelensky-Erdogan Talks

By AFP

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Volodymyr Zelensky and Recep Tayyip Erdogan in August 2022 in Lviv, Ukraine. **Ukrainian Presidential Press Office / Planet Pix via ZUMA Press Wire / TASS**

The Kremlin said Friday it will "closely follow" upcoming talks between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and his Turkey counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan, describing their meeting in Istanbul as "important."

The Ukrainian and Turkish leaders will meet in Istanbul for talks on the eve of the 500th day since Moscow launched its offensive.

"We will very closely follow the results of these talks," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

"It will be interesting for us to find out what was discussed. It's important," he added.

Peskov said Moscow "cherishes" its relationship with Ankara and acknowledged Erdogan's

mediation efforts.

"Mr. Erdogan has repeatedly made great efforts to end various problems within the framework of the Ukrainian conflict and played a mediating role," the spokesman said.

He added that Moscow "did not exclude" talks between President Vladimir Putin and Erdogan.

The Turkish leader has retained good ties with both Kyiv and Moscow since the Kremlin launched its Ukraine military campaign last February.

He helped broker a key grain deal last year to unblock Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea.

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