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Putin Aide Says No Peace Talks With Kyiv Amid Kursk Offensive

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Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov. **kremlin.ru**

Russian presidential aide Yuri Ushakov said Monday that holding peace talks with Kyiv would be impossible so long as Ukrainian forces continue their offensive in the southwestern Kursk region and occupy parts of Russian territory.

“At this stage, given this escapade, we will not talk,” Ushakov told the Telegram news channel Shot, referring to Ukraine’s inclusion into the Kursk region.

According to the aide, President Vladimir Putin’s proposals for a ceasefire “have not been canceled, but at the moment it would be completely inappropriate for there to be a negotiation process.”

The timing of possible future negotiations would “depend on the situation, including on the battlefield,” Ushakov added.

Ukrainian troops stormed across the border into Russia’s Kursk region nearly two weeks ago,

seemingly taking Moscow by complete surprise. While Russian forces appear to have halted the initial lightning pace of the offensive, they have nevertheless struggled to push Kyiv's armed forces out of the country.

Last week, authorities in Kyiv said the Kursk town of Sudzha, which is a key transit hub for Russian gas that flows to Europe via Ukraine, was under the control of Ukrainian troops.

On Sunday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that the goal of the Kursk offensive is to create a "buffer zone," making it the first time he publicly spoke about the operation's aims. "Our primary task in defensive operations overall," he said.

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