

Putin Rules Out 'Freezing' War in Ukraine, Top Spokesman Says

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Sergei Karpukhin / POOL / kremlin.ru**

President Vladimir Putin will not agree to freeze the war in Ukraine along the current front lines, the Kremlin [said](#) Wednesday, countering reports that he might consider such an arrangement in discussions with U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

“The [Russian] president has repeatedly said that any option of freezing the conflict won’t work for us,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters during a daily briefing. “It’s important for us to achieve our goals.”

Peskov’s remarks followed a Reuters [report](#) — citing anonymous sources — suggesting Putin might be open to freezing hostilities and negotiating the division of Ukrainian territories currently under Russian occupation.

However, reports suggest outgoing U.S. President Joe Biden’s decision to allow Ukraine to use long-range weapons against Russian targets could complicate any settlement, possibly

encouraging Moscow to continue fighting.

Putin has repeatedly [demanded](#) that Ukraine abandon its NATO membership ambitions and withdraw its forces from four regions partially occupied by Russia — Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia — as preconditions for peace talks. Ukraine, in turn, insists on a complete withdrawal of Russian forces from those areas, as well as Crimea, which Moscow annexed in 2014.

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More recently, the Kremlin leader has expressed willingness to engage with Trump, who said he could end the war within 24 hours of taking office, though the president-elect has not disclosed specifics of his plan.

Russian officials and business elites previously [told](#) The Moscow Times that they see Trump’s return to the White House as an opportunity to weaken European resolve and partially restore relations with Washington.

Putin reportedly reaffirmed Russia’s negotiating position, including its security concerns and front-line status, in a recent phone call with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz that was criticized by the Ukrainian authorities.

Moscow and Kyiv have not engaged in direct peace talks since the early weeks of the invasion, which is closely approaching its third-year mark.

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