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Putin ‘Destroying Russia’ by Refusing Ukraine Deal, Trump Says

By AFP

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U.S. President Donald Trump. **Gage Skidmore (CC BY-SA 2.0)**

U.S. President Donald Trump said Monday that Russian President Vladimir Putin is "destroying Russia" by refusing to negotiate an end to the war with Ukraine.

"He should make a deal. I think he's destroying Russia by not making a deal," Trump told reporters upon returning to the Oval Office. "I think Russia's going to be in big trouble."

Trump also revealed plans to meet with Putin, noting their previous summit during his first term, which drew backlash after Trump appeared to accept Putin's claims over U.S. intelligence.

"I got along with him great. I would hope he wants to make a deal," the U.S. president said.

Acknowledging the prolonged conflict in Ukraine, Trump added: "He can't be thrilled he's not

doing so well. I mean, he's grinding it out, but most people thought that war would have been over in about one week, and now you're into three years, right?"

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Trump also criticized the impact of the war on Russia, pointing to economic struggles and inflation.

The U.S. president said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky had expressed interest in a peace agreement. "Zelensky wants to make a deal."

During his campaign, Trump pledged to bring a swift end to the war in Ukraine, with aides suggesting that he would use U.S. military aid to pressure Kyiv into making concessions.

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