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Vance Threatens Sanctions, U.S. Troops in Ukraine if Putin Rejects Peace Deal

February 14, 2025



Vice President J.D. Vance. **Gage Skidmore (CC BY-SA 2.0)**

Washington could impose tougher sanctions on Moscow and send U.S. troops to Ukraine if Russian President Vladimir Putin fails to negotiate a Ukraine peace deal in good faith, U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance told the Wall Street Journal in an interview published Friday.

"There are economic tools of leverage, there are of course military tools of leverage," Vance was quoted as saying. "I think there is a deal that is going to come out of this that's going to shock a lot of people."

On Wednesday, U.S. President Donald Trump said he held a "lengthy and highly productive phone call" with Putin, adding that the two agreed to begin ceasefire negotiations for the war in Ukraine.

That phone call, along with Trump's comments that Ukraine is unlikely to reclaim all of its lost territory or achieve NATO membership as part of any potential settlement, have stunned European officials and raised concerns that Kyiv may be sidelined in discussions about its own

future.

“The president is not going to go into this with blinders on,” Vance told WSJ. “He’s going to say, ‘Everything is on the table, let’s make a deal.’”

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Vance also assured that Washington cares about Ukraine’s sovereignty, adding that a peace deal with Russia could have “any number of formulations, of configurations.”

His comments contradict U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth’s statements this week that no U.S. peacekeepers would be sent to Ukraine and that it was “unrealistic” for Kyiv to seek NATO membership or pre-2014 borders. Hegseth later walked back those remarks, telling reporters that Trump would ultimately decide on specific concessions.

When asked later on Friday to comment on Vance’s statements about potential new sanctions on Moscow and U.S. boots on the ground in Ukraine, the Kremlin appeared to be taken by surprise.

“We had not heard such wording before — it wasn’t stated previously,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. “We expect to receive further clarification.”

The Trump administration’s changing statements on future peace talks come at a critical moment for the war in Ukraine.

Russia’s nearly three-year war against its neighbor is expected to dominate discussions at this week’s Munich Security Conference, where Zelensky will meet with Hegseth, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and special envoy for Ukraine and Russia Keith Kellogg.

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