

Zelensky Accuses Trump of Falling for Russian 'Disinformation'

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Volodymyr Zelensky and Donald Trump. **President Of Ukraine / flickr**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday accused U.S. President Donald Trump of succumbing to Russian "disinformation," remarks that may further drive a wedge between Kyiv and the new U.S. administration.

Speaking at a press conference on Tuesday, Trump echoed several Kremlin talking points about the war in Ukraine, blaming authorities in Kyiv for having "started" the conflict and suggesting Zelensky was a deeply unpopular and potentially illegitimate leader.

Trump claimed Zelensky had a 4% approval rating in his country. However, according to February [polling](#) by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, the Ukrainian leader has an approval rating of 57%.

Zelensky pushed back against Trump's comments on Wednesday, saying: "Unfortunately, President Trump, for whom we have great respect as leader of the American people... lives in this disinformation space."

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Zelensky's remarks came after top Russian and U.S. officials on Tuesday held their [first direct talks](#) since Moscow's February 2022 invasion, with delegates from both sides striking a positive tone while downplaying the chances of an immediate breakthrough in Ukraine peace negotiations.

"I believe that the United States helped Putin break out of years of isolation," Zelensky said of the meeting in Saudi Arabia, marking some of his sharpest criticism yet of Trump's approach to Russia and the Ukraine war.

Authorities in Russia, meanwhile, welcomed Trump's comments, calling him the "only Western leader" who understood that "dragging Ukraine into NATO" was a cause of the nearly three-year war.

"He is a completely independent politician," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was quoted as saying by the state-run TASS news agency on Wednesday.

Trump's special envoy for Ukraine, Keith Kellogg, arrived in Kyiv on Wednesday morning, saying his visit was aimed at "sitting and listening" to Ukraine's concerns after Kyiv criticized Washington for excluding it from the talks in Saudi Arabia.

AFP contributed reporting.

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