The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S. and Russia Held Secret Talks on Ukraine in Switzerland – Reuters

February 21, 2025

Artem Geodakyan / TASS

U.S. and Russian figures have held secret back-channel discussions on Ukraine in Switzerland since Donald Trump's election victory in November, Reuters reported Thursday, citing anonymous sources familiar with the matter.

The so-called "track two" talks, which involve unofficial expert dialogues rather than government negotiations, are aimed at "improving communication and floating ideas" rather than drafting concrete proposals, according to the report.

Participants in the meet-ups have included non-government officials with diplomatic and security experience, and at least a "small number" of Trump advisers were aware of the discussions.

Related article: Kremlin Courts Trump Behind the Scenes as His Foreign Policy Rhetoric Rattles U.S. Allies

It is unclear when exactly the talks began, how frequently they have been taking place or whether any Ukrainian representatives were involved.

During the Biden administration, U.S. national security officials and high-ranking Kremlin members reportedly engaged in so-called "track 1.5" discussions — semi-official backchannel talks — in order to understand each other's red lines and prevent escalation.

One recent "track two" meeting took place in Geneva during last week's Munich Security Conference, where U.S. officials reportedly surprised European allies by suggesting Washington might concede to some of Moscow's key demands before peace talks begin.

However, one Reuters source said the backchannel discussions may have "lost their relevance" as U.S. and Russian negotiators established more official communication channels in recent days.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/02/21/us-and-russia-held-secret-talks-on-ukraine-in-switzerland-reuters-a88103