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1-Month Ukraine Truce Would Test Russia's Commitment to End War, France Says

By AFP

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British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron. **Simon Dawson / No 10 Downing Street**

France and the United Kingdom are proposing a one-month truce in Ukraine "in the air, at sea and on energy infrastructure" following emergency talks in London over the weekend.

In an interview with France's Le Figaro newspaper published on Sunday, French President Emmanuel Macron said that the truce plan would not initially cover ground fighting as it would be "difficult to verify that the front is respected."

Peacekeepers would be deployed at a later date, Macron said, adding: "There won't be European troops on Ukrainian soil in the coming weeks."

French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot told France Inter radio on Monday that the

proposed one-month truce "would allow to prove the good will of Vladimir Putin."

"And it's then that real peace negotiations would start. We want a solid peace and a durable peace," Barrot added.

An initial truce would be "a way of verifying that Russia is willing to end this war," he said, emphasizing that no withdrawal of Russian troops on the ground was envisaged during the truce.

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Meanwhile, Luke Pollard, who serves as the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the British Armed Forces, said Monday that "no agreement has been made on what a truce looks like."

"But we are working together with France and our European allies to look at what is the path to how... we create a lasting and durable peace in Ukraine," Pollard told Times Radio.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a U.K. government official told AFP that "there are various options on the table, subject to further discussions with the U.S. and European partners, but a one-month truce has not been agreed."

In the Le Figaro interview published Sunday, Macron suggested that European countries should raise their defense spending to between 3% and 3.5% of their GDP to respond to the United States' shifting foreign policy priorities and Russia's militarization.

"For three years, the Russians have spent 10% of their GDP on defense," he told the newspaper. "So we have to prepare for what's next."

Asked by France Inter to respond to Trump's accusation that Zelensky was "gambling with World War III," French Foreign Minister Barrot acknowledged the danger of the conflict spreading.

"Never has the risk of a war in Europe, in the European Union been so high... the threat keeps getting closer to us, the front line keeps getting closer to us," he said.

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