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Rubio Calls Ukraine War 'Proxy' Conflict Between U.S. and Russia

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Secretary of State Marco Rubio. **U.S. State Department**

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Wednesday that the United States is engaged in a "proxy" war with Russia in Ukraine, marking a rare public acknowledgment by a Western official following a major shift in U.S. policy toward Ukraine.

"President [Donald] Trump views this as a protracted, stalemated conflict, and frankly, it's a proxy war between nuclear powers: the United States, helping Ukraine, and Russia," Rubio told Fox News.

"It needs to come to an end, and no one has any idea or any plan to bring it to an end," he said, commenting on Trump's recent decisions to freeze military and intelligence assistance to Ukraine as part of an effort to advance peace talks.

Moscow has long claimed it is fighting a proxy war against the U.S.-led West in Ukraine, which has received significant Western military aid to help repel Russia's invasion.

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Rubio criticized Ukraine's allies for what he described as a flawed approach to military assistance. "Their plan is to give [Ukraine] as much as they need for as long as it takes. That's not a strategy," said Rubio, a former foreign policy hawk who had previously called Russian President Vladimir Putin a "thug" and a "gangster."

On Thursday, the Kremlin said it agreed with Rubio's characterization of the war in Ukraine as a "proxy" conflict between the United States and Russia.

"We've said this many times before, that it's a conflict between Russia and the collective West," spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. "Therefore, this completely echos the position that our president and foreign minister have repeatedly voiced."

Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has scrambled to contain the fallout from his meeting with Trump last week, saying Wednesday that his team has begun working with U.S. officials on arranging another meeting.

CIA Director John Ratcliffe said earlier on Wednesday that Trump ordered a "pause" in intelligence sharing with Ukraine, two days after suspending military aid.

The moves have deepened fears in Kyiv and across Europe that Ukraine could be pressured into accepting a peace deal on terms favorable to Moscow — or risk losing U.S. support entirely.

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