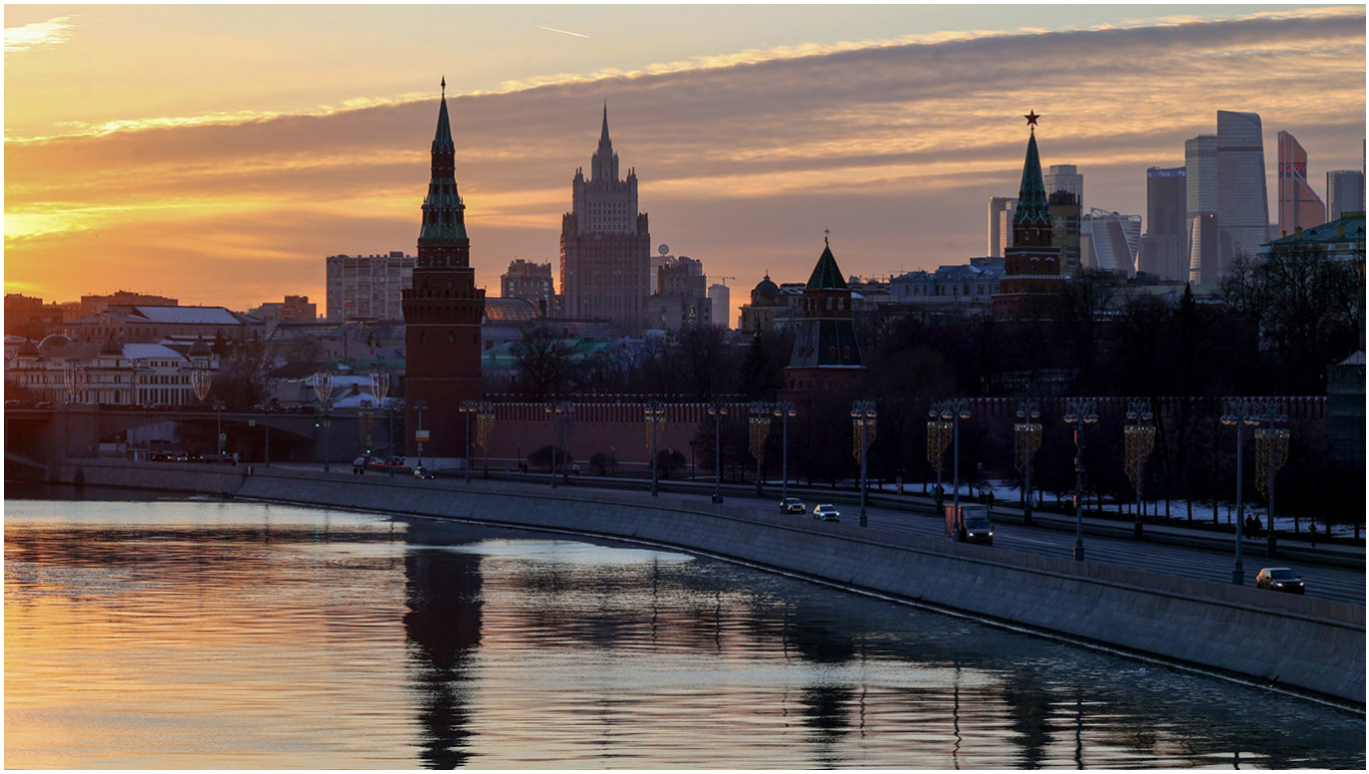
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Russia Denies Reports About New Talks With U.S. in Saudi Arabia

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The Kremlin in Moscow. **Yaroslav Chingaev / Moskva News Agency**

Russian and U.S. officials do not plan to meet in Saudi Arabia this week for a new round of diplomatic talks, the Kremlin said Monday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov denied a CNN report claiming that Trump administration officials planned to meet separately with Russian and Ukrainian officials in Saudi Arabia this week. The report, citing an unnamed source, did not specify who would have attended the discussions.

The denial also comes after U.S. President Donald Trump said Sunday that "big meetings" in Saudi Arabia would include Russia. Trump has sought to repair relations with Moscow since taking office in January.

Last month, top Russian and U.S. diplomats met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, agreeing to start negotiations on ending the Ukraine war. A follow-up meeting in Turkey between lower-level officials focused on normalizing diplomatic operations after a series of tit-for-tat staff

expulsions.

“We’re at the initial stage of restoring our bilateral relations. The road ahead is quite long and difficult, but at least the two presidents have expressed their political will in this direction,” Peskov told reporters.

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Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is set to arrive in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday for talks with U.S. officials aimed at brokering a peace framework and an initial ceasefire. Washington’s Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff said the U.S. wants to “get down a framework for a peace agreement.”

Last week, the U.S. paused military aid to Ukraine, including intelligence sharing and access to satellite imagery, in a bid to pressure Kyiv into negotiations with Moscow, which launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022.

Peskov said Russia hopes the U.S.-Ukrainian talks in Jeddah will demonstrate Ukraine’s “willingness to achieve peace.”

Trump’s renewed engagement with Putin and his criticism of Zelensky have sparked fears in Kyiv and European capitals that the U.S. may push Ukraine toward a settlement favoring Russia.

However, Trump said Friday he was considering further sanctions on Russia in response to intensified attacks against Ukraine.

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