The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

What Does Russia's Military Think About a Potential Ceasefire?

March 14, 2025



A Russian soldier in the Kherson region of Ukraine. **Alexei Konovalov / TASS**

The Russian military appears skeptical of the United States' proposed 30-day ceasefire in Ukraine as President Vladimir Putin expressed "serious questions" regarding Washington's initiative.

"Those with combat experience understand that any pause in fighting is an opportunity to improve tactical positions [for Ukraine]," one Russian serviceman told The Moscow Times.

"Everyone [in the army] considers a temporary ceasefire complete nonsense, there's no other option at the front," said the soldier, who spoke on condition of anonymity for safety reasons.

His sentiment aligns with a broader view among the Russian military that the conflict will not end swiftly and that any pause in fighting will merely give a strategic advantage to Kyiv.

Putin on Thursday said that Moscow was willing to discuss the ceasefire plan with U.S. counterpart Donald Trump but stressed that "nuances" needed to be addressed.

Related article: Orthodox Easter Diplomacy: Kremlin and White House Pursue Fast-Tracked Putin-Trump Meeting

Putin specifically questioned how a ceasefire could be controlled along a front line spanning thousands of kilometers and what would happen to the remaining Ukrainian troops in Russia's Kursk region.

"The president's words highlight the main flaw in the U.S. proposal," said one of the largest Russian military Telegram channels, Archangel of the Special Forces, which has 1,116,000 subscribers and describes itself as "a channel for airborne troops."

"Why should our leadership agree to an obviously losing scenario that will achieve nothing other than giving the enemy time to regroup and return to the battlefield refreshed? Of course, we will still win, but at what cost? The initiative [on the front line] is entirely ours," it said.

Putin praised Russia's progress against Ukraine this week while visiting Kursk, saying that the troops were advancing along the front line.

Moscow has recently made gains on the battlefield, claiming to have pushed Ukrainian forces out of the Kursk region town of Sudzha, which is seen as one of Kyiv's potential bargaining chips in territorial exchanges with Russia.

Pro-Kremlin war correspondent Alexander Kots said he viewed Putin's visit to Kursk — where he appeared in military uniform for the first time and hailed Russia's advances — as a signal that Russia was not considering a ceasefire.

"This is not about a ceasefire. It's a signal to our American 'partners once again,' to our Ukrainian beggars, and, importantly, to our military. There will be no betrayal," Kots said.

Related article: Russian Pro-War Figures, Military Bloggers Slam U.S. Ceasefire Proposal

One Russian soldier told the Moscow Times that while "many soldiers hope for an end to the war as they don't want to die or be wounded," they also noticed that the ceasefire negotiations have not changed the reality on the ground.

"There has been no order from military leadership to stop [military] preparations so far. Across all fronts — from Luhansk to Zaporizhzhia — fortifications are being reinforced," he said, referring to his fellow soldiers at the front.

The soldier said he and his fellow troops stay updated on battlefield developments via their phones despite the military's ban forbidding soldiers from bringing their devices to the front lines.

Another Russian soldier, reflecting on the shifting geopolitical landscape, said he believed that the negotiations could ultimately secure Russian control over the four Ukrainian regions annexed by the Kremlin in 2022.

Since seizing Crimea in 2014 and launching its full-scale invasion in February 2022, Russia

has occupied around one-fifth of Ukraine's internationally recognized territory.

The pro-war Telegram channel Rybar, which has close ties to the Russian military and over 1,323,000 subscribers, said Russia's "response to the American proposal was quite clear: the U.S. and its peacekeeping plans are better than what came before, but there are nuances."

"The main is [Ukrainian President] Volodymyr Zelensky's statement that mobilization will not be canceled and that the Ukrainian Armed Forces will continue to receive weapons. Thus, the Kyiv regime will not create conditions for an immediate ceasefire, let alone meet other Russian demands," it said.

Pro-Russian Telegram channel Povernutyye na Voyne (Obsessed With War) also reposted a message criticizing Ukraine: "In a situation where one side presents unconditional ultimatums under the guise of dialogue, it is impossible to reach a peace agreement."

"Therefore, in the coming days, one can expect accusations from the American side about Russia's unwillingness to make peace, which will likely lead to an escalation of the war," it added.

Russian soldiers at the front also appear less than optimistic about the war ending quickly and negotiations being successful.

"No one expects to be back home by the summer," the Russian soldier told The Moscow Times.

"Everyone understands that we are in this for the long haul."

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/03/14/what-does-russias-military-think-about-a-potential-ceasefire-a88364