

Putin Pressures Trump to Recognize Annexed Ukrainian Territories – Kommersant

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Vladimir Putin attends the 34th Congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. kremlin.ru

President Vladimir Putin is pushing U.S. President Donald Trump to recognize Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territory in exchange for a pledge not to seize more land, the Kommersant business newspaper [reported](#) late Tuesday, citing anonymous sources from a closed-door meeting where the Kremlin leader outlined his stance.

Russia declared the annexation of Ukraine's Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk regions in September 2022 after sham referendums, despite not fully controlling any of them. Moscow also annexed the Crimean Peninsula in 2014.

According to Kommersant, ongoing U.S.-Russia negotiations for ending the war in Ukraine center on securing Washington's recognition of all five regions as Russian territory under the argument that "there's no taking back what Russia has gained."

“If this [recognition] happens soon, Russia... will not lay claim to Odesa and other Ukrainian territories,” the publication wrote, relaying Putin’s message following the annual congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, a major business lobby.

Related article: [Russia and Ukraine Agree to Halt Attacks on Energy Infrastructure, But Broader Ceasefire Talks Stall](#)

Ahead of a highly anticipated phone call with Trump on Tuesday, Putin argued that the full-scale invasion of Ukraine could have been avoided if the West had initially accepted Russia’s sovereignty over Crimea, as well as the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, where Russian-backed separatists have been fighting Ukrainian forces since 2014.

Kommersant’s report suggested that Putin intends to keep pushing for territorial gains, as Ukrainian forces “don’t have time to dig in.” Sources at the meeting told the publication that Putin trusts Trump and believes the two can strike a deal.

On Wednesday, the Kremlin [said](#) Putin and Trump did not discuss the U.S. possibly recognizing Russia’s annexation of Ukrainian territory during Tuesday’s phone call.

Putin agreed to a 30-day pause on attacks against energy infrastructure, but the conversation between the two leaders failed to produce a broader ceasefire agreement between the two warring sides.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he supported the limited ceasefire, but added that he believes Putin’s refusal to agree to a broader deal indicated that the Russian leader was not “ready” for peace and still seeks to “weaken” Ukraine.

U.S.-Russia negotiations are scheduled to continue in Saudi Arabia on Sunday, Trump’s Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff [told](#) Fox News after Tuesday’s call.

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