

Trump Offers to Take Control of Ukraine's Nuclear Power Plants in Ceasefire Deal

March 20, 2025



The White House

President Donald Trump proposed that the U.S. assume control of Ukraine's nuclear power plants to safeguard the country's energy infrastructure as part of a ceasefire plan during a call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday.

Trump suggested the U.S. take operational control or even take over the ownership of the nuclear power plants, which now generate about two-thirds of Ukraine's electricity.

"He said the United States could be very helpful in ensuring these plants continue to operate," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Wednesday. "If the United States owned them, that would offer the best protection for this infrastructure and support Ukraine's energy needs."

U.S. Energy Secretary Chris Wright [said](#) that U.S. management of Ukrainian nuclear power

plants could facilitate peace efforts.

"How do we bring peace to Ukraine? How do we get this fighting to stop? Which takes both sides to lay down their arms? But if it was helpful to achieve that end, have the U.S. run nuclear power plants in Ukraine. No problem, we can do that," he said.

He highlighted the U.S.'s technical expertise, saying: "We have immense technical expertise in the United States to run those plants. I don't think that requires boots on the ground."

The phone call between Trump and Zelensky focused on the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, Europe's most powerful reactor. The plant is located in the eponymous region, which is also one of the [four Ukrainian regions annexed by Russia in 2022](#).

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Zelensky [told](#) the Financial Times that he and Trump had only discussed the Zaporizhzhia plant and did not confirm plans for the U.S. to take control of Ukraine's nuclear power plant fleet.

The Zaporizhzhia plant has already been mentioned in the negotiations with Russia as it is currently under Russian occupation and could become a bargaining chip in the ongoing talks to find a ceasefire agreement.

Trump called Zelensky to brief him on his [1.5-hour phone call](#) with Vladimir Putin a day earlier where the Russian leader agreed to halt attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure for 30 days.

Details of the possible nuclear power plant operations will be discussed at a meeting this weekend in Saudi Arabia.

Zelensky said a halt on energy strikes in the war with Russia could be established quickly, but warned Ukraine would respond in kind if Moscow violated the terms of the limited ceasefire. He said Kyiv would draw up a list of facilities that could be subject to a partial ceasefire brokered by Washington that would include not only energy but also rail and port infrastructure.

Zelensky also requested additional air defense systems from the U.S. to protect civilians, a request Trump agreed to address by coordinating with European allies.

According to Reuters, Zelensky also said that Ukraine had received new supplies of several F-16 fighter jets, but he declined to specify how many or when the delivery had happened.

A tired Zelensky told reporters the call with Trump was "probably his most substantive and positive" talks yet and added that he had not felt under pressure, Reuters reported.

The proposal that the U.S. take control of Ukraine's five working nuclear power plants is a new addition to the previously discussed [minerals deal](#) where the U.S. would take half of the revenues from the exploitation of Ukraine's [considerable mineral resources](#). That deal has

been put on pause until a ceasefire agreement can be struck with Russia.

The White House noted that Trump has "moved beyond" earlier proposals involving American companies extracting oil, gas and rare metals in Ukraine, focusing instead on stabilizing the region's energy infrastructure in the readout of the call with Zelensky.

Trump's Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff has said another round of talks between Russian and U.S. officials aimed at a permanent ceasefire and end to the war will take place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on Sunday. It was unclear whether Ukraine would be involved in those talks.

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