The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Putin Warns Business Leaders of 'Slow and Difficult' Ukraine Ceasefire Talks – Report

March 21, 2025

kremlin.ru

President Vladimir Putin told Russian business leaders in a closed-door meeting not to expect a quick peace deal with Ukraine, journalist Farida Rustamova reported Thursday, citing anonymous sources who attended the meeting.

Business executives and government officials who participated in Tuesday's annual congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, a major business lobby, reportedly concluded from Putin's remarks that U.S.-mediated negotiations would be "difficult and slow," despite the Trump administration's optimistic public statements.

"This [war and sanctions] machine won't be that easy to turn around," one attendee was quoted as saying after the private session.

The source described Putin's demeanor as "positive but objective," lacking "unbridled

optimism" about a quick ceasefire or the lifting of sanctions.

Putin's reported comments came ahead of a scheduled phone call with U.S. President Donald Trump Tuesday evening. Following their conversation, the Russian leader agreed to a 30-day pause on attacks against energy infrastructure but stopped short of accepting a broader ceasefire in the war.

Related article: Hedge Funds, Beware – Russia Is a Bad Investment

"The president advised us not to be naive and to understand how many people and interests are involved in the processes currently taking place," Rustamova quoted another source as saying.

A third attendee said Putin believes that even if sanctions are lifted, "the United States and the West would figure out how to pressure us anyway."

Rustamova's report follows reporting from the Kommersant business newspaper, which suggested that Putin intends to continue pursuing territorial gains in Ukraine, as Russian forces "don't have time to dig in."

According to Kommersant, Putin is pushing Trump to recognize Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, Luhansk and Crimea regions in exchange for Moscow's agreement not to lay claim to additional territory.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/03/21/putin-warns-business-leaders-of-slow-and-difficult-ukraine-ceasefire-talks-report-a88434