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Putin Floats UN-Backed Transitional Government in Ukraine

By AFP

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President Vladimir Putin said late Thursday that Russian forces have a "strategic initiative" on the front line in Ukraine and floated the idea of establishing a "transitional" government in Kyiv under the auspices of the United Nations.

"Along the entire front line, our forces have the strategic initiative," Putin said during a visit to the northern city of Murmansk. "There are reasons to believe that we will finish them off," he added, referring to Ukrainian forces.

"The Ukrainian people themselves should understand what is happening," the Russian leader said.

Putin also floated the idea of a UN-backed transitional government in Ukraine.

"We could, of course, discuss with the United States, even with European countries, and of

course with our partners and friends, under the auspices of the UN, the possibility of establishing a transitional administration in Ukraine," he said.

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Putin claimed such an administration could "organize a democratic presidential election" and help facilitate peace talks. He cited East Timor's 1999 UN-led transition as a precedent.

Putin's remarks came after European leaders and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky met in Paris for a summit aimed at coordinating policy on the war in Ukraine.

French President Emmanuel Macron said after the summit that France and Britain were putting forth plans for a "reassurance force" in Ukraine after there is an end to the fighting.

He emphasised that members of such a force would not be peacekeepers, deployed on the frontline or any kind of substitute for the Ukrainian army.

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