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No Quick Sanctions Relief Expected for Russia, Major Business Lobby Says

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Alexander Shokhin, President of RSPP. **Igor Akimov / Roscongress Photobank**

The head of Russia's Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RSPP), a major business lobby, said Friday that he does not expect quick sanctions relief despite optimism over a possible U.S.-Russian deal on ending the war in Ukraine.

"Despite our optimism about possible agreements on Ukraine with the U.S., we understand there will be no rapid decrease in sanctions pressure," RSPP President Alexander Shokhin was quoted as saying by the state-run news agency TASS.

"We assume that 2025 will be a rather difficult year with internal and external challenges," Shokhin said at an annual regional members' gathering in the central city of Yekaterinburg.

President Vladimir Putin told RSPP last month that Russia was by far the world's most-sanctioned country with close to 28,600 economic and personal restrictions.

"This exceeds — by a significant margin — all sanctions ever imposed on all other nations

combined," Putin said during an annual congress of the business lobby.

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Putin reportedly told Russian business leaders in a closed-door meeting at last month's RSPP congress not to expect a quick peace deal with Ukraine. Still, the Kremlin leader tasked the lobby group with finalizing proposed regulations this month for Western firms seeking to return to Russia.

RSPP's bearish outlook comes amid U.S. President Donald Trump's pursuit of direct talks with Russia to fulfill his campaign promise of bringing a quick end to the war in Ukraine.

This week, Trump expressed frustration over Russia's refusal to accept a U.S.-proposed ceasefire. Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy for international economic and investment cooperation Kirill Dmitriev visited Washington this week in what was reported as Moscow's attempt to de-escalate tensions.

Dmitriev told reporters Thursday that he saw a "positive dynamic" in U.S.-Russian relations, with more meetings needed to resolve differences.

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