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U.S. Proposed Russian Sanctions Relief as Part of Ukraine Peace Deal – Bloomberg

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Ukrainian civilians injured in a Russian air strike on Kharkiv Friday. **State Emergency Service of Ukraine**

The United States shared a draft Ukraine ceasefire plan with European allies that includes potential sanctions relief for Russia, Bloomberg reported Friday, citing anonymous European officials familiar with the matter.

The proposal was presented during talks in Paris on Thursday, with officials from Britain, Germany, France and Ukraine present.

According to the U.S. State Department, the plan outlines Washington's vision for a "durable and lasting peace" and was shared with "all parties" following recent talks between Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Bloomberg reported that the U.S. proposal would freeze the war along current front lines, effectively leaving occupied Ukrainian territory under Russia's control. It would also block

Ukraine's bid to join NATO in exchange for lifting unspecified sanctions.

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The proposed framework would not constitute a final settlement and would require further discussions with Ukraine, Bloomberg said. Follow-up talks are scheduled to take place in London next week.

While the news outlet did not specify which sanctions could be lifted, the Kremlin has said sanctions relief is a prerequisite for restoring ties with Washington. In particular, Russian officials have pushed for lifting aviation-related restrictions.

Before leaving France, Rubio said any future peace deal could involve rolling back sanctions, and gave negotiators "days" to determine whether a ceasefire is achievable. Last month, however, EU leaders agreed to tighten sanctions against Russia.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Friday acknowledged the "difficult" state of negotiations, but said Moscow remained open to dialogue while defending its interests.

He also criticized the Paris talks for containing what he called "calls to further militarize Europe and Ukraine instead of seeking solutions."

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