

Trump Threatens to Withdraw From Ukraine Peace Talks Unless Deal Reached 'Very Shortly'

April 19, 2025



Donald Trump. **AP Photo / Alex Brandon**

President Donald Trump warned Friday that the United States was ready to “take a pass” on negotiations to end the war in Ukraine unless Moscow and Kyiv showed a willingness to make progress toward peace in the coming days.

“If, for some reason, one of the two parties makes it very difficult, we’re just going to say: ‘You’re foolish. You’re fools. You’re horrible people.’ And we’re going to just take a pass,” Trump told reporters in the Oval Office. “But hopefully we won’t have to do that.”

He declined to blame either Russian President Vladimir Putin, who ordered the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, or Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for stalling peace negotiations. Instead, Trump insisted that both sides needed to move forward.

His comments came just hours after U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, speaking in Paris,

said the U.S. could abandon its role as peace broker if there were no signs of a rapid breakthrough in the ongoing talks.

Related article: [U.S. Proposed Russian Sanctions Relief as Part of Ukraine Peace Deal – Bloomberg](#)

A decision to exit the talks could come “very shortly,” Trump warned. “No specific number of days, but quickly. We want to get it done.”

When a reporter asked whether he was being “played” by Putin, the U.S. president responded: “Nobody’s playing me, I’m trying to help.”

“My whole life has been one big negotiation, and I know when people are playing us and I know when they’re not,” he said. Asked whether Putin was dragging out the talks, Trump said: “I hope not. I’m going to let you know about that soon... he’s got a big force out there.”

Trump has pushed both sides toward a ceasefire but has so far failed to extract major concessions from the Kremlin, despite a recent phone call with Putin and multiple visits to Russia by his special envoy, Steve Witkoff.

A temporary moratorium on strikes against Ukraine’s energy infrastructure — the only notable concession Trump secured from Moscow — expired Friday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Meanwhile, European leaders have sought a greater role in the negotiations, especially as the Trump administration urges the continent to shoulder more of the burden for Ukraine’s security.

France hosted a round of talks in Paris on Thursday, calling them a “positive process.” The meetings included French President Emmanuel Macron, Rubio and Witkoff.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/04/19/trump-threatens-to-withdraw-from-ukraine-peace-talks-unless-deal-reached-very-shortly-a88796>