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Putin Ready for Ukraine Talks 'Without Preconditions' – Kremlin

By AFP

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Russia is ready to hold peace talks with Ukraine "without preconditions", President Vladimir Putin told U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff at a meeting on Friday, the Kremlin said Saturday.

"During yesterday's talks with Trump's envoy Witkoff, Vladimir Putin reiterated that Russia is ready to resume negotiations with Ukraine without any preconditions," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, adding that Putin has stated that several times in the past.

The Russian President has regularly set out his demands regarding Ukraine, which include control of the five Ukrainian regions that Moscow claims to have annexed, Ukraine's renunciation of NATO membership and its demilitarisation.

More broadly, Putin views the conflict as a "hybrid war" waged by NATO against Russia and wants to overhaul Europe's security architecture, particularly the positioning of NATO forces

based near Russia's borders.

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Putin and Witkoff on Friday discussed the possibility of direct talks between Russia and Ukraine during a three-hour meeting in Moscow, which was described by a Kremlin aide as constructive.

Russia and Ukraine have not held direct talks on the fighting since the start of Moscow's offensive in 2022. The conflict has devastated swathes of eastern Ukraine and killed tens of thousands of people.

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