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Trump Eyes Erdogan's Help to End Ukraine War

By AFP

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AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein

U.S. President Donald Trump said Monday he wanted to work with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine, after the two leaders spoke by telephone.

Trump added on his Truth Social network that Erdogan had also invited him to visit Turkey and that the Turkish leader would be meeting him in Washington.

"I look forward to working with President Erdogan on getting the ridiculous, but deadly, War between Russia and Ukraine ended — NOW!" Trump posted.

Trump, who promised to end the Ukraine war within 24 hours of starting his second term in January, has been pushing Kyiv and Moscow to reach a ceasefire deal.

NATO member Turkey has sought to maintain good relations with both of its Black Sea neighbors since the Russian invasion and has twice hosted talks aimed at ending the war.

The two leaders also discussed "all things Syria, Gaza and more" in what Trump called a "very good and productive telephone conversation" with Erdogan.

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Trump said he and Erdogan had an "excellent" relationship during his first term as U.S. president from 2017 to 2021.

The Turkish president's office said Erdogan had told Trump that U.S. efforts to ease sanctions on Syria would "contribute" to stabilizing the war-torn country.

Washington has said any normalization or lifting of sanctions following the December ouster of Bashar al-Assad will depend on verifiable progress by Syria's new authorities on priorities including actions against "terror."

Erdogan also thanked Trump for his "approach to ending wars," with the statement mentioning Ukraine, Gaza and negotiations on Iran.

He raised the issue of the war-battered Gaza Strip, telling Trump that humanitarian aid should "be delivered to Gaza without interruption."

Israel halted all aid to the 2.4 million Palestinians in Gaza in March and its security cabinet has approved the expansion of military operations in Gaza including the "conquest" of the Palestinian territory.

Trump is due to visit Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates next week.

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