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Trump Floats Idea of Flying to Istanbul for Russia-Ukraine Talks

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Donald Trump talks to reporters. **The White House**

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday raised the prospect of joining direct talks between Russian and Ukrainian officials in Istanbul later this week.

Trump, who will be visiting the Middle East this week, told reporters at the White House that "you may have a good result out of the Thursday meeting in Turkey between Russia and Ukraine."

"I was thinking about flying over," the U.S. president said. "I've got so many meetings, but I was thinking about actually flying over there. There's a possibility of it, I guess, if I think things can happen, but we've got to get it done."

Ukraine and its European allies are urging Russia to agree to a 30-day ceasefire by the end of Monday, warning of additional sanctions if Moscow fails to comply.

However, Russian President Vladimir Putin has effectively rejected the offer, instead

proposing direct talks with Ukraine in Istanbul on Thursday. During those talks, Putin said, the two sides might be able to agree to a pause in fighting.

Zelensky responded by challenging Putin to meet him personally in Istanbul on the proposed date, though the Kremlin has neither rejected nor supported the offer for a face-to-face meeting.

An anonymous Ukrainian official told Axios that Zelensky plans to travel to Turkey regardless of Moscow's stance on the 30-day ceasefire.

Ukraine's Air Force said early on Monday that Russia launched dozens of drone attacks across the country overnight.

Reuters contributed reporting.

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