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World Must Pressure Putin to Begin Peace Talks – Finnish PM

By AFP

May 26, 2025



Alexei Konovalov / TASS

The international community must pile pressure on Russian President Vladimir Putin to begin negotiating a ceasefire in Ukraine, Finland's prime minister told AFP on Monday.

Petteri Orpo, whose country shares a 1,340-kilometer (830-mile) border with Russia, said that "without force, Putin will not try to find a solution. That's why we need more pressure."

He said the international community needed to throw "sanctions, military aid to Ukraine, more military aid, political support, all [that] we can" to help Ukraine fend off Russia.

Orpo was speaking on the sidelines of a meeting of Nordic prime ministers in Finland.

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His remarks came after Kyiv said Russia fired its biggest-ever drone barrage on Ukraine overnight, just hours after Donald Trump called Putin "crazy" and warned that Moscow risked new sanctions if it kept up its deadly bombardments.

Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said there had been no signs of Russia wanting a ceasefire in Ukraine so far.

"We haven't seen any indication of that, unfortunately," he told AFP.

"I hope this will lead to the U.S. being more explicit, and also putting pressure, not pulling out," he said, referring to Russia's recent attacks on civilians.

He said the attacks demonstrated Putin's "lack of will... to seriously engage in ceasefire or peace negotiations."

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