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Trump Special Envoy Says Russian Concerns Over NATO Enlargement 'Fair'

By Reuters

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Keith Kellogg. **AFP**

U.S. President Donald Trump's envoy to Ukraine said Russia's concern over the eastward enlargement of NATO was "fair" and the United States did not want to see Ukraine in the U.S.-led military alliance.

Asked by U.S. network ABC News about a Reuters report that Russia wanted a written pledge over NATO not enlarging eastward to include Ukraine and other former Soviet republics, Keith Kellogg said: "It's a fair concern."

"We've said that, to us, Ukraine coming into NATO is not on the table, and we're not the only country that says that," Kellogg said. "I could probably give you four other countries in NATO, and it takes 32 of the 32 to allow you to come into NATO."

"That's one of the issues that Russia will bring up... They're not just talking Ukraine. They're

talking the country of Georgia, they're talking Moldova," he added.

Kellogg said the sequencing of the peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine would include an attempt to merge their two memoranda, drafted separately, into one final document, with talks in Turkey proposed for next week.

"When we get into Istanbul next week, we'll sit down and talk," Kellogg said, adding that national security advisers from Germany, France and Britain would join discussions on the memorandum with the United States.

Kellogg said Trump was "frustrated" with Russia because he had seen "a level of unreasonableness" from President Vladimir Putin. He scolded Russia for striking Ukrainian cities and said he had told Ukraine to show up to talks next week.

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