The Moscow Times
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Zelensky Urges Trump to Broker Ukraine Peace

By AFP

October 11, 2025



U.S. President Donald Trump (L) and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky (R) **Jim Watson/AFP**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urged Donald Trump to broker peace in Ukraine like in the Middle East during a phone call Saturday, saying if Trump could stop one war, "others can be stopped as well."

The call came a day after Russia launched a large-scale attack on Ukraine's energy grid, knocking out power to parts of the capital Kyiv and nine other Ukrainian regions.

Diplomatic efforts to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine have slowed in recent months in part because global attention shifted to Israel's two-year war with militant Palestinian group Hamas, Kyiv says.

Trump, who announced the first phase of a ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas on Wednesday, met Russian President Vladimir Putin for talks in August but failed to extract any

kind of peace deal.

"I had a call with U.S. President Donald Trump. A very positive and productive one," Zelensky said on Facebook, congratulating Trump for his "outstanding" ceasefire plan in the Middle East.

"If a war can be stopped in one region, then surely other wars can be stopped as well, including the Russian war," Zelensky added, calling for Trump to pressure Russia into negotiations.

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Relations between the two leaders have warmed dramatically since February, when they sparred during a now-infamous televised meeting at the White House.

Trump has since grown more hostile towards Moscow while expressing sympathy for Ukraine.

In September, he wrote on Truth Social that Kyiv should try to "take back" all its occupied territory with Europe's and NATO's help.

U.S. First Lady Melania Trump said Friday she had secured the release of Ukrainian children abducted by Russia after establishing an extraordinary back channel of communication with Putin.

Strikes cut power

Russian attacks on Ukraine killed at least five people on Saturday and cut power to parts of Ukraine's southern Odesa region, according to Ukrainian officials.

Moscow has targeted Ukraine's energy grid each winter since it invaded in 2022, cutting power and heating to millions of households and disrupting water supply in what Kyiv says is a brazen war crime.

Russia denies targeting civilians and says Ukraine uses the energy sites to power its military sector.

Ukrainian drone attacks, meanwhile, killed two people in Russia, according to regional officials.

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Both countries have accused each other of frustrating progress towards a peace deal in recent months.

Russia blames Kyiv and its European allies for the impasse, accusing them of undermining peace negotiations with Washington.

Ukraine and Europe accuse Russia of playing for time so it can seize more Ukrainian territory.

Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, describing it as a "special military operation" to demilitarize the country and prevent the expansion of NATO.

Kyiv and its European allies say the war is an illegal land grab that has resulted in tens of thousands of civilian and military casualties and widespread destruction.

Millions of Ukrainians have been forced to leave their homes since 2022, while Russia now occupies around a fifth of Ukrainian territory — much of it ravaged by fighting.

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