The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Rubio in Geneva for Talks on Ukraine Peace Plan

By Nina Larson and Agnes Pedrero for AFP

November 23, 2025



VALENTIN FLAURAUD / AFP

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrived in Geneva Sunday morning for discussions on a U.S. plan to end the Ukraine war, after Washington signalled that there was room for negotiation on the controversial proposal.

Trump has given Ukraine until Nov. 27 to approve the plan to end the nearly four-year conflict, but Kyiv is seeking changes to a draft that accepts some of Russia's hardline demands.

Before the Ukrainian delegation met with the Americans Sunday afternoon, President Volodymyr Zelensky hailed that "diplomacy has been reinvigorated," voicing hope "the conversation can be constructive."

"The bloodshed must be stopped," he said on X, insisting, "We all need a positive outcome."

In Geneva, Ukraine's top negotiator Andriy Yermak said his delegation had met with high-level officials from Britain, France and Germany before heading into the meeting with Rubio.

Ukrainian, European and Canadian officials were also gathering in the Swiss city, although the format for the talks remained unclear.

The U.S. plan to end the Ukraine war has drawn pushback from Kyiv, its allies and U.S. lawmakers ahead of Sunday talks.

The 28-point plan would require Ukraine to cede territory it currently controls, cut its army and pledge never to join NATO. Trump told reporters Saturday it was not his final offer and he hoped to stop the fighting "one way or the other."

Related article: European Officials Express Doubt Over Trump Peace Plan

Trump's special envoy for Ukraine, Keith Kellogg, speaking on Fox News, described the plan as "a work in progress."

Ukraine's European allies, who were not included in drafting the proposal, said the plan required "additional work" as they scrambled at the G20 summit in South Africa to come up with a counter offer to strengthen Kyiv's position.

"Today we hope to iron out the final details of the peace agreement," a U.S. official told AFP Sunday, asking not to be named.

Ukrainian dignity not negotiable

Diplomatic envoy Steve Witkoff and U.S. Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll were also scheduled to take part on the U.S. side, while the Ukrainian delegation is headed by Andriy Yermak, a top aide of President Volodymyr Zelensky.

"Consultations will take place with partners regarding the steps needed to end the war," Zelensky said.

"Our representatives know how to defend Ukraine's national interests and what is necessary to prevent Russia from launching a third invasion," having annexed Crimea in 2014 and mounted a full-scale invasion in 2022, he said.

Related article: Trump's Peace Plan Favors Russia. Putin Still Won't Accept It.

Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the senior officials would meet in Geneva "to take things further forward," stressing the importance of solid "security guarantees" for Ukraine under any settlement.

Starmer said his national security adviser, Jonathan Powell, would be in Geneva. Italian diplomatic sources said Rome was sending national security advisor Fabrizio Saggio.

French President Emmanuel Macron, meanwhile, told a news conference at the G20 that the

plan contained points that had to be more broadly discussed as they concerned European allies, such as Ukraine's NATO ties and Russian frozen assets held in the EU.

He said the 30 countries in the "coalition of the willing" supporting Kyiv will hold a video call on Tuesday following the Geneva talks.

'Plan needs more work'

Western leaders at the G20 summit said that the U.S. plan was "a basis which will require additional work."

"We are clear on the principle that borders must not be changed by force. We are also concerned by the proposed limitations on Ukraine's armed forces, which would leave Ukraine vulnerable to future attack," the leaders of key European countries, Canada and Japan said in a joint statement.

Macron said the plan contained points that had to be more broadly discussed as they concerned European allies, such as Ukraine's NATO ties and frozen Russian assets held in the EU.

He said the 30 countries in the "coalition of the willing" supporting Kyiv would hold a video call on Tuesday following the Geneva talks.

"We all want peace and we are agreed. We want the peace to be strong and lasting," he said, insisting a settlement must "take into account the security of all Europeans."

Related article: Ukraine, U.S. to Start Talks in Switzerland on Trump's Plan to End War

'Wish list'

The Kremlin has welcomed the Trump plan, but there were no plans for Russian officials to join Sunday's talks, according to the U.S. official.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, said the blueprint could "lay the foundation" for a final peace settlement, but threatened more land seizures if Ukraine walked away from negotiations.

Ahead of Sunday's talks, Washington insisted the Trump proposal was official U.S. policy, denying claims by a group of U.S. senators that Rubio told them the document was a Russian "wish list."

Rubio himself insisted on social media late Saturday that "the peace proposal was authored by the U.S."

"It is offered as a strong framework for ongoing negotiations. It is based on input from the Russian side. But it is also based on previous and ongoing input from Ukraine."

Zelensky said in an address to the nation on Friday that Ukraine faces one of the most challenging moments in its history, adding that he would propose "alternatives" to Trump's

plan.

“The pressure on Ukraine is one of the hardest. Ukraine may face a very difficult choice: either the loss of dignity or the risk of losing a key partner,” Zelensky said, referring to a possible break with Washington.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/11/23/rubio-in-geneva-for-talks-on-ukraine-peace-plan-a91213