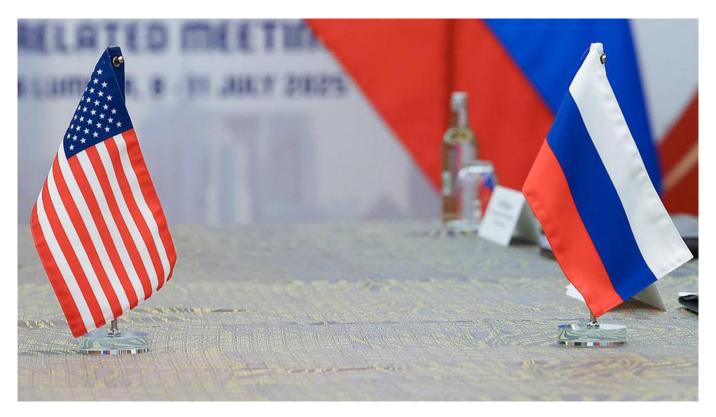


## Trump Says Envoy Witkoff Will Meet Putin in Moscow as Peace Deal 'Close'

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## **Russian Foreign Ministry**

Donald Trump said Tuesday he is sending his envoy Steve Witkoff to meet with Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Moscow as the U.S. president seeks to close out a deal to end the war in Ukraine.

Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform that there were "only a few remaining points of disagreement," while European leaders voiced skepticism toward the prospects for peace and Russian missiles continued to rain down on Kyiv.

He also expressed hope to meet "soon" with Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, "but ONLY when the deal to end this War is FINAL or, in its final stages."

An <u>initial U.S. plan</u> seen as heavily favoring Russia that leaked last week has been replaced by a new version taking more of Ukraine's interests into account after a flurry of discussions between U.S. and Ukrainian officials.

Ukraine has agreed to the terms of the revised framework, ABC News <u>reported</u>, citing a U.S. official who said only "minor details" remained before it could be formally presented.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt <u>confirmed</u> the second part of the official's remarks, writing that "there are a few delicate, but not insurmountable, details that must be sorted out" between the three sides.

The ABC News report came after U.S. Army Secretary Dan Driscoll and Russian delegates met in Abu Dhabi, intended as a follow-up to this weekend's talks in Geneva where U.S. and Ukrainian officials worked to advance negotiations.

Driscoll emerged upbeat from meeting with Russian counterparts, with his spokesman saying: "The talks are going well and we remain optimistic."

Just hours earlier, seven people were killed in Kyiv in a Russian drone and missile attack, city officials said.

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Trump has renewed his push to end the nearly four-year war after previous talks this summer flatlined following his August summit with Putin in Alaska.

Last week, he had set a hard deadline for Ukraine to agree by Nov. 27 to a 28-point draft peace deal with Russia that was widely seen as caving to Moscow's demands.

But he appeared to ease that pressure after Ukrainian and U.S. officials met in Geneva on Sunday, and the original proposal has since been pared down to roughly 20 points.

The latest version of the draft, which has not been published, is "significantly better" for Kyiv than the original U.S. one, a senior official familiar with the matter told AFP.

It remains unclear whether Putin will accept the revisions.

Kremlin officials said Monday that the original U.S. plan contained "main provisions" they viewed as acceptable, while stressing it required "further reworking."

Moscow has also rejected a separate 28-point proposal drafted by European leaders, who were blindsided by Washington's plan and sought to offer an alternative more closely aligned with Kyiv's priorities.

Russian officials said earlier that they had not received any updates from Washington about changes to the U.S. proposal.

They have declined to discuss details of the leaked draft in public, citing the complexity of the negotiations.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told a press conference on Tuesday that Moscow was expecting the White House to send the updated version of its peace plan.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian negotiator Rustem Umerov said officials in Kyiv were pushing for a meeting between Zelensky and Trump "at the earliest possible date in November to finalize the remaining stages and reach an agreement" to end the war.

The two presidents last met in Washington in August for <u>multilateral talks</u> with European leaders after Trump's summit with Putin in Alaska.

Zelensky called those talks "the best" he had with Trump up to that point and said he would be willing to meet with Putin face-to-face, but the Russian leader ultimately turned down the offer.

## AFP contributed reporting.

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