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If Europe Wants War With Russia, 'We Are Ready,' Putin Says

By AFP

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Putin speaking at the Russia Calling investment forum on Tuesday. **kremlin.ru**

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday that Russia was "ready" for war if Europe seeks one, accusing the continent's leaders of trying to sabotage a deal on the Ukraine war before he met with U.S. envoys.

The comments came as U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff and son-in-law Jared Kushner were in Moscow for high-stakes talks on ending the nearly four-year war, which were preceded by days of intense diplomacy.

"We are not planning to go to war with Europe, but if Europe wants to and starts, we are ready right now," Putin told reporters in Moscow.

"They have no peaceful agenda, they are on the side of war," he added, repeating his claim that European leaders were hindering U.S. attempts to broker peace in Ukraine.

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He added that European changes to Trump's latest plan to end the war "aimed solely at one thing — to completely block the entire peace process and put forward demands that are absolutely unacceptable for Russia."

Washington's initial 28-point draft to end the conflict was later amended after criticism from Kyiv and Europe, which viewed it as heeding many of Russia's maximalist demands.

The plan to end the war is championed by Trump, but European countries fear it risks forcing Kyiv to cave in to Russian demands, notably on territory.

Fearing further Russian aggression, Europe has repeatedly said an unfair peace should not be imposed on Ukraine.

The Trump envoys are now seeking to finalize the plan with the approval of Moscow and Kyiv.

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