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Only Diplomacy Can Resolve Middle East War, Kremlin Says

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

The Kremlin said Monday that resuming diplomatic negotiations between the United States and Iran is the only way to bring an end to the rapidly escalating Middle East war, which is now in its fourth week.

Top spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that talks on ending the conflict should have begun "yesterday."

"This is the only way to effectively ease the catastrophically tense situation in the region," Peskov said.

His comments come after U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday threatened to "obliterate" Iranian power plants if officials in Tehran refused to reopen the Strait of Hormuz within 48 hours.

The effective closure of the narrow waterway, through which a fifth of the world's oil and

natural gas normally passes, has led to skyrocketing energy prices.

Iran responded to Trump's threat by saying that any attack on its energy infrastructure would be met with strikes on Israel's power plants and those supplying U.S. bases across the Gulf region.

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On Monday, Peskov also warned against targeting Iranian nuclear sites after the Natanz nuclear facility, which enriches uranium, was reportedly struck this weekend.

"We believe that strikes on nuclear facilities are potentially extremely dangerous ... Therefore, the Russian side, taking an extremely responsible stance on this issue, has repeatedly voiced its concerns," he said.

Last week, Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom and the UN's nuclear watchdog said a projectile struck the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant in Iran, marking the first such incident since the start of the war last month.

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