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Zelensky Calls for Easter Ceasefire With Russia

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Volodymyr Zelensky. **President Of Ukraine / flickr**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Monday proposed an Eastern ceasefire with Russia, while also calling for a mutual halt on strikes against energy infrastructure to help relieve pressure building in oil and gas markets.

"We're ready for a ceasefire during the Easter holidays," Zelensky told reporters in a WhatsApp chat, saying that "normal people who respect life" would seek a permanent ceasefire.

"But we're ready for any compromises, except those involving our dignity and sovereignty," he added.

Orthodox Easter takes place this year on April 16.

Last year, President Vladimir Putin unilaterally declared an Easter ceasefire with Ukraine, which was marred by mutual accusations of violations.

Zelensky at the time urged Moscow to extend the 30-hour truce into 30 days to pave the way for a broader ceasefire, a proposal that Putin ignored.

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Ukraine peace negotiations brokered by the Trump administration have been on pause since the United States and Israel launched their war on Iran in late February. The effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a conduit through which a fifth of the world's oil and gas supplies pass, has sent energy prices soaring.

Zelensky said Monday that unspecified "partners" of Ukraine had in recent days sent "signals" for it to refrain from attacking Russian energy infrastructure.

Ukrainian drone strikes on ship terminals and refineries have contributed to an estimated 40% loss in Russia's oil export capacity this month, according to Reuters.

"If Russia is ready to stop hitting Ukrainian energy facilities, we will not respond against their energy sector," Zelensky said.

There was no immediate response to the proposal from Russia.

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