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Kremlin Rebuffs Zelensky's Easter Ceasefire Proposal

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A Russian serviceman in the Donetsk region. **Dmitry Yagodkin / TASS**

The Kremlin on Tuesday dismissed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's call for an Easter ceasefire, claiming his proposal was vague and fell short of reaching a lasting peace.

Zelensky on Monday proposed a truce during the Easter holiday, which in the Orthodox calendar takes place on April 12 this year. He described the proposal as a "compromise," noting that "normal people who respect life" would seek a permanent ceasefire.

"We don't see any clearly articulated initiative for an Easter ceasefire based on Zelensky's statements," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters during a daily briefing.

Peskov argued that Kyiv was in more urgent need of an end to the war than Moscow because Russian troops "are advancing across the entire front line, faster in some places and slower in others."

"That's why Zelensky can and must make a decision in a timely manner. Later, this decision

will have to be made at a much higher price... We repeat once again: Zelensky must take responsibility and make the appropriate decisions so that we reach a lasting peace, not just a truce," he said.

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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.

On Monday, Zelensky also called for a mutual halt on strikes against energy facilities to help relieve pressure building in oil and gas markets due to the Iran war.

Peskov did not mention that proposal, but he said Russia was doing its best to defend critical infrastructure after the Baltic Sea port of Ust-Luga was attacked for a fourth time in a week on Tuesday.

Ukraine has ramped up its strikes on Russian energy infrastructure in recent weeks. Since late March, it has struck Ust-Luga and the nearby port of Primorsk multiple times in a bid to deprive Russia of windfalls from soaring oil prices.

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