

# Ukraine and Russia Declare Separate Truces

By [AFP](#)

May 04, 2026



Russian President Vladimir Putin (L) and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky (R). [kremlin.ru](#), [president.gov.ua](#)

Russia on Monday declared a unilateral ceasefire with Ukraine between May 8-9, when Moscow holds its annual World War II Victory Day commemorations, and threatened a "massive missile strike" on Kyiv if Ukraine violated it.

Ukraine responded by declaring a truce of its own between May 5-6, saying it was "not serious" to expect it to observe a ceasefire during a Russian military holiday.

The quarrelling between the two sides comes with a lull in U.S.-led diplomatic efforts to end the war, as Washington shifts its focus to conflict in the Middle East.

Russian strikes killed nine people across Ukraine on Monday, according to Ukrainian officials, while a Ukrainian drone crashed into a high-rise building in an upscale Moscow

neighborhood overnight.

"In accordance with a decision of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armed Forces, Vladimir Putin, a ceasefire has been declared from May 8–9, 2026... We hope that the Ukrainian side will follow suit," the Russian Defense Ministry [said](#) in a post on state-backed messaging service MAX.

"If the Kyiv regime attempts to implement its criminal plans to disrupt the celebration of the 81st anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War [World War II], the Russian Armed Forces will launch a retaliatory, massive missile strike on the center of Kyiv," it added.

"We warn the civilian population of Kyiv and employees of foreign diplomatic missions of the need to leave the city promptly."

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Russia marks World War II Victory Day each year with a massive military parade through Red Square.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said Monday that having a ceasefire so Moscow could mark the celebration was "not serious," and that Russia was afraid Ukrainian drones would "buzz over Red Square."

"As of today, there has been no official appeal to Ukraine regarding the modality of a cessation of hostilities that is being claimed on Russian social media," Zelensky [said](#) in a post on X.

"In this regard, we are announcing a ceasefire regime starting at 00:00 (21:00 GMT) on the night of May 5-6. In the time left until that moment, it is realistic to ensure that silence takes effect," he added.

The Ukrainian leader later landed in the Gulf nation of Bahrain for talks on "security cooperation," a source in the Ukrainian delegation told AFP.

## **Deadly attacks**

Russian strikes on Ukraine killed at least nine people on Monday, according to Ukrainian officials.

A Russian ballistic missile attack on the town of Merefya — outside Ukraine's second city of Kharkiv — killed seven civilians and wounded dozens earlier Monday, regional authorities said.

AFP journalists in Merefya saw several bodies strewn in the street, covered by blankets and white sheets — with shops, houses and cars damaged.

A separate Russian strike on the village of Vilniansk in the southern Zaporizhzhia region killed two others, the region's Governor Ivan Fedorov said.

"Unfortunately, a married couple was killed: a 51-year-old man and a 62-year-old woman," Fedorov said.

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Their 31-year-old son was wounded in the strike, along with three other people, he added.

In Russia, a Ukrainian drone killed a civilian in the border region of Belgorod, Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov [said](#).

A Ukrainian drone also [hit](#) a residential high-rise building in an upscale Moscow neighborhood overnight, the Russian capital's Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said.

### **Russian advances slow**

Russia lost more territory than it gained in Ukraine in April for the first time since a Ukrainian counteroffensive in the summer of 2023, an AFP analysis of data from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) [showed](#).

Moscow ceded control of about 120 square kilometers (46 square miles) between March and April, the ISW data showed.

Despite the fighting at the front reaching a near-stalemate, intense and deadly drone-dominated attacks have continued unabated in recent months.

Russia's advances have slowed since late 2025, as communication issues in the Russian army combined with Ukrainian counterattacks helped Kyiv make localized breakthroughs in the southeast.

The Ukrainian army's net gains — their first in more than two years — were marginal, however, representing only 0.02% of Ukrainian territory, the data showed.

Moscow currently occupies just over 19% of Ukraine, the majority of which it seized during the first weeks of its invasion in 2022.

Approximately 7% including Crimea and areas in the Donbas region, were already under Russian or Russia-backed separatist control before the invasion.

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