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Kremlin Rejects EU Mediation in Ukraine Peace Talks

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

The European Union is a "direct participant" of Russia's war in Ukraine and therefore cannot serve as a good-faith mediator between the two countries, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Thursday.

"It's obvious that Europeans do not want to, nor can they, become mediators. Furthermore, they are now effectively direct participants in the war on Kyiv's side," Peskov told reporters.

He disparaged Brussels for trying to deal what he called "a crushing blow" to Russia, which he said makes it impossible for the bloc to play a role in peace talks.

European Council president António Costa said last week that he saw "potential" for the EU to negotiate with President Vladimir Putin, provided such efforts are coordinated with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky.

A senior Ukrainian official told the Financial Times that Kyiv welcomes "more coordination

on the European level" if it can help apply "more pressure" on Russia.

In response, Putin said he would prefer former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder or "someone who has not badmouthed Russia" as the EU's representative in potential talks.

After Brussels rejected the idea, German media reported that the EU was considering his successor, Angela Merkel, who avoids harsh rhetoric in her criticism of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

On Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that both Russia and Ukraine view Washington as the only country able to mediate the conflict, though he welcomed other countries to join the efforts.

Despite the Trump administration trying to position itself as a neutral broker, the United States has been the largest single-country military donor to Ukraine throughout the war, and in October, the White House sanctioned Russia's two largest oil companies, Rosneft and Lukoil.

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