The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Kremlin Aide Denies Russia Agreed to Include Europe in Ukraine Peace Talks

November 16, 2026



President Vladimir Putin and Kremlin foreign policy aide Yury Ushakov. **Peter Kovalev/TASS**

A senior Kremlin aide said on Monday that Russia had not yet agreed to the participation of European representatives in the next round of Ukraine peace talks, contradicting comments by U.S. negotiators after talks in Moscow that the Europeans would be at the next negotiations.

Russian, Ukrainian and U.S. officials held talks in Abu Dhabi last week for the first time in nine months. Two U.S. envoys, Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, then met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow and said afterwards that Europe would take part in the next round of negotiations.

Related article: Yury Ushakov: The Quiet Power Broker in Russia's Talks With Team Trump

But Kremlin aide Yury Ushakov, though he did not reference the U.S. comments directly, told reporters: "What is currently being discussed is holding the next round [of talks] in a

trilateral format. These talks resumed in Abu Dhabi several days ago, and it was agreed that they would continue. The date has not yet been agreed and the expansion of the format — some people are talking about it — but it has not been agreed with us."

Asked what would need to happen for Russia to consent to Europe participating, Ushakov said: "A great deal would have to be done before that could be agreed. In particular, it may be necessary to hold another round, or perhaps more than one round, of trilateral talks."

He said their involvement depended on Russia receiving "a clear signal from the Europeans about what they want and what constructive, substantive contribution they can make to a successful settlement in Ukraine."

Russia and the European Union, Britain and Ukraine remain far apart when it comes to how the war should end.

European Council President Antonio Costa said on Friday that European Union leaders had agreed that Europe's team for Ukraine peace talks will comprise five major military powers — non-member Britain plus France, Germany, Italy and Poland — and EU institutions.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/11/16/kremlin-aide-denies-russia-agreed-to-include-europe-in-ukraine-peace-talks-a94279