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US-Russia talks on Ukraine conflict set to begin in Riyadh



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High-level talks between the United States and Russia will take place in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, focusing on ending the Ukraine conflict and restoring diplomatic ties. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrived in Riyadh on Monday as part of a planned visit, accompanied by National Security Adviser Mike Waltz and Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Kremlin adviser Yuri Ushakov are also expected to attend. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated that discussions will focus on reviving the full spectrum of US-Russia relations and setting the stage for potential negotiations on Ukraine, with a possible meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin under consideration. The talks follow a recent phone conversation between the two leaders, during which Trump directed officials to accelerate diplomatic efforts to end the conflict. While reports suggest Kirill Dmitriev, head of Russia's sovereign wealth fund, may also attend, Peskov declined to confirm. He also did not comment on whether Trump and Putin would meet face-to-face in Saudi Arabia later this month. Meanwhile, Rubio is also expected to discuss regional issues with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, particularly the US proposal to resettle Palestinian residents of Gaza in other Arab nations, a plan that has sparked strong opposition across the Arab world. Saudi Arabia has firmly rejected any forced displacement of Palestinians and is working on an alternative Gulf-

led reconstruction initiative while maintaining its stance on Palestinian statehood. Before arriving in Saudi Arabia, Rubio met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Tel Aviv, where he reaffirmed US support for Israel amid growing regional tensions. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, currently visiting the UAE, has expressed interest in traveling to Saudi Arabia and Turkey but is not scheduled to meet with US or Russian officials.